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FLORIDA,

OR THE NYMPH OF THE WESTERN FOUNTAIN.—A ROMANCE IN VERSE

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Author of 'Atalantis,' 'The Kinsmen,' 'Yemassee,' 'Damsel of Darien,' &c., &c.

XLV.

'Farewell, Farewell! I had not thought to leave,
Sweet country, in the mellowness of life,
Thy shores of sunny verdure; nor to grieve
When launching on a world of newer strife;
Yet bitter are the promptings that bereave
The heart of all its kindred, as a knife
That's sharpened for the purpose, must divide
The kindred blossoms growing side by side.

XLVI.

'Yet, not the fear of strife, the dread of toil,
The wild and its vicissitudes and waste;
At these the hardy frame, well-trained, may smile,
And rather, to the trial of them, haste;
But, from the hearts that capture and beguile,
To fly is worse than mortal; and I taste
For the first time the bitter of that boon
I begged too fondly, and lament too soon.

XLVII.

'And thou sweet cruelty, unkind but dear,
Why did thy stubborn heart not bend to mine,
Receive my homage and requite my care,
Nor doom me thus to wander and repine;
Thou dost not know my love, thou scorn'st my tear,
Mock'st the fond spirit close to death by thine;
Ah! hast thou then no dread, that for the present,
The future state will be a state unpleasant?

XLVIII.

'Methinks the tortures should be doubly cruel,
For maids who trifle with fond hearts below;
Damsels, whose pleasure it has been to do ill,

To noble men, should there be made to know,
That kindness is their duty, love their jewel,
Their proper virtue, kissing while they go,
Bestowing charity through all their senses;—
Ah! could they know how sweet the recompense is!

XLIX.

'For love wins love, and charity that blesses
The heart that hungers, is thrice blessed in turn;
Not unrequited are the maid's caresses,
Who not denies them to the hearts that burn;
She who has hearkened to the youth's addresses,
Nor met his prayer with heedlessness and scorn,
Methinks, though in her purgatorial state,
Should be permitted a first choice for mate.

L.

'Nor be tethered to that 'single blessedness,'
The hope unmet, the parties not agreeing:—
Divorce should remedy her least distress,
Her bonds dividing, and her spirit freeing,
A motion of more right, should bring release,
With settlement the same, though from it fleeing,
And nothing should be suffer'd to prevent her
Seeking some soul that better may content her.

LI.

'And yet, that separation!—Where, O! Death,
Abide thy tortures, if they be not found,
In the sad pang of that unuttering breath,
Which gives 'farewell' its pang and fatal sound;
That word, which killing rapture, quickens faith,
Though swathed in tears and born of the deep wound,
That is hope's death,—and works the laboring breast,
That nought may gladden, and which cannot rest.

LII.

'Ay, death's sole pain is mental: other pain
It hath not: Though the limb be cramped and torn,
By racking long convulsion, yet the brain,
And the sad heart are those which still have borne;
They are the sufferers and they strive in vain,
They cannot part with passions which were worn,
Even as a garment, round th' unshelter'd heart;—
The agony of dying, is to part

LIII.

'With those who loved and love us:—scarcely less
Than death are minor partings. To arise
At evening, when the clouds about us press,
And storms are hanging in the angry skies,
And with no staff, but perils numberless,
Our sole companions to behold the eyes,
We would not see in sorrow, flooded o'er,—
Then speed away unto some foreign shore!—

LIV.

'This is the mental death—the agony
Beyond all pain of limb, all fever smart,
All racking of the joints:—this is to die.
Sad burial of the hope that lit the heart;—
Love mourning, doom'd affections lingering by,
Muttering the words of death,—'We part, we part!'
Ah! what the trial, where the pangs, the fears,
To equal this sad source of thousand tears?

LV.

'And when the lamp of life upon a verge
Unseated as a vision, sinks at last;
And when the spirit launches on the surge
Of that dark, drear, unfathomable vast,
We call eternity—its latest dirge,
Bemoans not pangs, still pressing, not o'erpast,
But that all natural things, forms, stars and skies,
And the more loved than all, are fading from its eyes.

LVI.

'Thus still beloved, though all relentless fair,
I part from thee and perish. Never more
Shall I win sweetness from the desolate air,
Or find a fragrant freshness in the shore;
The sea that images my deep despair,
Hath still a kindred language in its roar,
And in the clouds that gather on our lee,
A mournful likeness to my soul I see.

LVII.

'The sense of life grows dim;—the glories pass,
Like those of melting rainbows from my sight;
Dark aspects rise as in the wizard's glass,
R-flect my inner soul, and tell of night;
Glooms gather on my vision, in a mass,
And all my thoughts, beheld in their dread light,
Rise like unbidden spectres,—rise to rave
Above the desolate heart, so soon their grave.

LVIII.

'This is your doing, damsel all too dear,
'Tis you have driven me forth;—'tis you have made,
A gallant knight that not till now knew fear,

Of his own thoughts and shadows still afraid;
You taunted him about that grisly hair,
Grey beard, deep wrinkles, bald and polished head;
Packing him forth, o'er sea, and woods and mountain,
To bottle water for you from that fountain.

LIX.

'Suppose his journey vain—suppose thy lover,
Seeking the means his boyhood to restore,
Fails in that foreign region to discover
The blessings he will then pursue no more:—
You'll give no tear to soothe the weary rover,
No smile to cheer him when he comes ashore;
You'll laugh to see his wrinkled melancholy,
And tell such stories of the old man's folly.'

LX.

Thus bitterly bemoan'd him to the wind
That moan'd in sympathy. The chafing seas,
Had their own mighty sorrows, and the mind
Of that brave knight,—now down upon his knees,
Before the Virgin mother,—grew resign'd;
Soothed somewhat by the softness of the breeze;—
He had his fears of ocean, and the seath
Of tempests, when they sally forth in wrath.

LXI.

Its very calms brought danger to his eye;
The stillness, was a threat of storm to come;
He could not here contend—he could but die,—
And then he'd like to struggle for it some;
He saw the wave, deceitful mirror, lie
Like some vast maelstrom, waiting for the doom;
Quiet, he knew, means danger; vol'anos sleep
Like giants, for a long while before they leap.

LXII.

In the far storm that whistles on the waves,
Sits danger not alone. The placid sea,
In which the wanton sea-maid nightly laves,
Conceals the whirlpool that a-gapes for thee,
Thou that look'st fondly down for ocean's caves,
Its golden sands, its glittering gems to see;
And most the monsters of the deep appear,
Where the broad waters glide, blue, beautiful and clear.

LXIII.

Thus spoke his fancies, for the field was new,
On which the knight now journeyed. Death is nought,
Whate'er his terrors, once held up to view,
Clearly, as when 'mong changing foes he fought,
In the fierce passage; He could strike and do,
Fame might be won there; service might be wrought;
But death by drowning was a source of fright,
Disquieting the stomach of our knight.

LXIV.

And when the winds of midnight waken'd up,
To revel on the bosom of the deep,
With gloom and thunder, a discordant troop,
Riding the mountain billows with dread sweep,
And from descending clouds, with desperate stoop,
Bidding the sharp and angry lightnings leap,

'Till the black seething waters burst in fire;—
Oh, how it made the good old knight perspire.

LXV.

He had, it may be said, a brave array,
Three ships, two hundred souls; some rugged spirits;
There came the Spaniard, Portuguese, Malay,
Jew, Gentile,—men of wild but various merits;
All free, loose rovers,—moral birds of prey,—
Such men as peace from time of war inherits;
Throat-cutting gentry—swaggering, fierce and fearless,
Main'd some of them in battle, armless, earless.

LXVI.

But not less useful in a fruitful era,—
Fruitful for all employment,—trading, fighting,
Marching and murdering;—men to do and dare;—a
Reckless rabble, forlorn hopes inviting;
Ready for aught, but let the foe appear;—a
Jovial crew, one sacred cause uniting;
Whose banners bore the cross, Constantine's wonder,
Much used in every age, to lead to—plunder.

LXVII.

Plunder and blood, and every rank brutality,
As much enjoyed as dinner or as drink;
Our knight review'd his men with cordiality;
In Moorish battle they had proved the pink
Of chivalry; though mercy and frugality
Were not among their virtues found, I think,—
Or mock'd them;—they had bathed their hands in
slaughter—
With as much coolness as we bathe in water.

LXVIII.

But there was one among the motley many,
A tall, brave looking lad, whose speaking eye,
Secured the knight's attention first, and then, he
He surveyed him with a strange anxiety;
Beholding him, he looked no more on any,
Of all his cutthroats, born to do or die;—
That manly form, brave glance and lofty brow,
They surely had encountered his ere now.

LXIX.

'But where? Who was he? What his purpose here?
With these wild braggarts? Could it be that one
So lofty looking, graceful, youthful, fair,—
Already in the hope and heart undone,
Debased by crime, abandon'd to despair,
Or worse, through all, to worse indifference run,
Should yield his soul up in such base communion,
A moral death most certain for such union.

LXX.

Your name? Who are you? Thus to the unknown
Spake Ponce de Leon.—'We have met before?'—
'Perchance,' replied the youth; 'but I am one,
You know not—of my lineage proud, but poor;—
Of friends bereft, by cruel fate undone,
I seek my fortune on the Indian shore;—
I feel that I have in me soul and strength,
And trust in God to make them known at length.'

LXXI.

'Tis a brave spirit;—but, declare your name!—
'That I must make;—a pride that will not bear
The sting of sympathy, and feels it shame,
Forbids me yield my father's to your ear:
Too proudly chronicled by deeds of fame,
Let it be silent till mine own appear;
When I have won my laurels I will speak,
What now would bring the blush upon my cheek.

LXXII.

'Meanwhile, I am Don Ferdinand de Lave,
Provenzal lineage;—this shall be my style;
'Till, with occasion, I may pierce my way
To glory, that my deeds may win one smile—'
'Ha, then, you love?'—The youth responded 'yea,'—
And a slight redness tinged his cheek the while;—
'I love, Don Ponce, but love without a penny
Is sure, in Spain, the maddest love of any.'

LXXIII.

'Unless it be the grey beard love,' our knight
Musingly murmured. 'Strange!' he mused a space;
'This youth and I were both in better plight
Were we but fortun'd in each other's case;
Had he my wealth, his barriers would be slight,
Mine were all tumbled an I wore his face;—
The devil take these women how they worry us,
Tease, lear, vex, wear, and flurry, hurry, scurry us!'

LXXIV.

That they were like in fortune with the fair,
Roused in Don Ponce a world of sympathy;
Unto that stranger youth he now drew near,
Soon raised him to his own Lieutenantcy;
Sought his communion, found no other dear,
And only asked for recompense, that he
Should be a listener, no impatience shewing,
While he went o'er the 'manner of his wooing.'

LXXV.

From rise of morn to set of blessed sun,
From blessed set of sun to rise of morn,
Still ever new, the story was begun,
Still did the knight anew his grievance mourn;
A tale beginning ever, never done,
The same old hope and fear, and love and scorn,
From stem to stern, was heard forevermore, a
Single name, and that was Leonora.

LXXVI.

The knight grew eloquent in his narration;
Spared not himself;—described his follies truly;
How much he labor'd in that strange vocation,
Love-making, in his old age lesson'd newly;
How faint the lady's smile; her approbation
How mix'd with jibe and jeer, and jest unruly;
And then her last and cruel requisition,
Which brought his stomach into such condition,

LXXVII.

In hope to pleasure hers. The young De Lave
Hearken'd the mournful story. Sigh for sigh,
Yielded in proper p'ace:—Was pleased to say—

'Twas the most piteous tale of cruelty
That human ear had heard for many a day.—
Ah! had Don Ponce beheld his glances sly,
The close compression of his lips, concealing
Some wicked thoughts that moment he was feeling,—

LXXVIII.

Could he have hearken'd, when the youth, alone,
Sang to himself, and all his soul confess'd;—
Have heard that sacred name, so dearly known,
In sobs of passion not to be repress'd,
Rise on the traitor's lips, in many a tone,
Of hoped fondness, struggling from his heart;—
Nay, see the billet,—which in moments stolen,
He read, with all his soul—which held her soul in;—

LXXIX.

The soul of Leonora :—Thus, her letter,
Breathed forth its language to the young De Laye;
'You only do I love, but love's a fetter,
If fortune lend no sunshine to the way;
Go forth, Alphonso, make your fortune's better,
Use the old knight and conquer at Cathay,
Bring home your spoils from Golden Chersonesus.—
Your empty handed lovers seldom please us.

LXXX.

'Beauty with youth is mighty; but with these,
Join fortune, and the man becomes invincible;
The two are always very sure to please,
The third must conquer—it embodies principle;
The first may win their way by slow degrees,
The third by instant storm, takes bosoms sensible;
You, dear Alphonso, own the two,—be steady,
Secure the third, and I am yours already.

LXXXI.

Of all the men I've known, you most I fancy,
The noblest form of beauty to my eyes;
But wealth is very needful to advance ye,
Win this, and with it, every dearer prize;
Let not the dream of this old knight entrance ye,—
Yet should you find where these strange waters rise,
Fill me some dozen bottles, cork and seal 'em.
Or find a way from old Don Ponce to steal 'em.

LXXXII.

'They'll be of little use to him I reckon,
Th' adventure solely to your good ensures,
You must be chief!—It needs not I should beckon
To glory, by depicting what is yours;
Perchance 'twere wisdom to impose a check on
Your ardent spirit when you reach those shores,
Lest you should find some Indian's venom'd arrow,
When you least think it, sticking in your marrow.

LXXXIII.

'Win gold and fame,—go forward bravely fighting—
Secure my dozen bottles;—take the lead,
Whene'er the prospect seems at all inviting;—
No telling what is done by fearless deed;—
Those pearls of Urabay are eye-delighting,
They tell me we can raise them from the seed;—
I would not have you wish in danger's eye,
But, at all hazards, get a good supply.

LXXXIV.

'Farewell! Fare ever well, that our loves' fare
May be made better. You are at a feast,
The knife in hand, before you noblest cheer,
Around and with you many a hungering guest;
Slow spirit and dull work, leaves labor bare,
He who most watchful is, his fare is best;
Go, dear Alphonso, go; your sails unfurl,
For love and India, Glory, gold and seed-pearl.'

LXXXV.

De Laye's farewell, breathed quite another tone;
Nor gold nor pearl beguiled him;—in his heart
Love was the sovereign, single-eyed, alone,
Impregnable, refusing to depart;—
Couch'd at the prow, when daylight all was gone,
He sang his parting strain with little art;
A low, sad ditty, simple song, untaught,
But earnest, deep, sincere, with feeling fraught.

DE LAYE'S FAREWELL.

1.

That sun which sinks with glorious train
Beneath the dark blue sea,
Shall hail me when he soars again,
Far distant, love, from thee;
Yet when he rises in the east,
I'll fancy that he bears,
A tribute from thy heaving breast,
Affection's gift of tears.

2.

Earth soon will drink his living ray,
And ocean with her voice,
Shout fiercely to her streams, at play,
As if they did rejoice.
To me, more welcome far, the dirge,
This burthen of the sea,
That reeking up with laboring surge,
Doth seem to moan with me.

3.

Sad wailing comes the sea-bird's note,
Along the waters breaking;
And dying tempest's echoes float,
Perchance my requiem shrieking!—
Yes, the same wave that now we hear,
With winds in music blending,
May howl my dirge upon thine ear,
By love and fortune ending.

4.

Ah! wilt thou shed a tear for him
Whose early life was sadness;
And bid for once the eye be dim,
Whose every glance was sadness;
On him whose love would still restrain
The sorrows that deplore him,
And bid thee gladly smile again,
As late thou smil'dst o'er him.

5.

Oh! vain the dream, that fondly sees,
Borne bright on Fancy's pinion,

Soft colorings fresh and fair like these,
In gentler Hope's dominion ;—
And vain the solace that would tell,
Though storm and sea divide us,
Of scenes remember'd, ah ! too well,
And forms, too loved, beside us.

6.

Yet, though the soothing dream be vain,
Of joys at future meeting ;
Of early bliss renew'd : gain,
As dear and not so fleeting ;
Yet shall the bird of better days
From memory's labyrinth wander,
To glad the Pilgrim's devious ways,
With music sweeter, fonder.

7.

And though it sings no happy themes,
Yet, mellowing all his sorrow,
It cheers the wanderer in his dreams,
And strengthens for the morrow ;
He sees thee blest, and still as bright,
Beside Morana's billow,
And knows that dreams of him at night,
Still gather round thy pillow.

8.

Yes, thou wilt watch that sun's last tint,
As in the west declining ;
Thou seest him leave his latest print,
On rocks where I am pining ;
And think and fancy brighter days
Where we may see it streaming,
Its fires upon our mutual gaze,
In milder lustre gleaming.

9.

Farewell, my native land, thou sky
For which my eye is straining,
I see thee still in memory's eye,
Each lovely tint retaining ;
Those lonely groves so dear to youth,
Those far, sweet shady bow'rs,
Where Passion poured his vow of truth,
And feeling heard on flow'rs.

10.

Farewell, the home that hope endears,
Where young Contentment found me,
Nursed in the arms of friendly years,
With spring-flowers bursting round me ;
Farewell, dear maid, yet ah, the song,
That wakes such fond emotion,
Is silenced in that thunder gong,
That shakes the realm of ocean.

11.

Though love's fond feeble voice be drown'd,
If, in thy gentle spirit,
An echo to my own is found,
Thou canst not fail to hear it :
Be happy, dearest, whilst thou may,
Yet if in dreams thou hearest,

1*

The pilgrim died afar, away,—
Ah ! still be happy, dearest !

LXXXVI.

It should not be forgotten, gentle reader,
That while these lovers sang their separate strains,
Their ships beneath a gale that proved a speeder,
Were posting swimmingly o'er ocean's plains ;
Not in their course perhaps ;—a tempest-breeder,
Took them aback, and addled Ponce's brains ;
About his stomach nothing need be said,
Though that was much more addled than his head.

LXXXVII.

The voyage was a long one ;—for the breeze
Shot forth on opposition's wings to stay
Their gallant vessels, which o'er unknown seas,
And managed by dull pilots, made their way ;
But at the ending of some eighty days,
The western continent before them lay ;
Blue skies, broad forests, deep and boundless waters,
And naked Indians, husbands, wives and daughters.

LXXXVIII.

Poor devils !—hapless was their wild condition
Till came the good Don Ponce to mend their case ;
He saw their need and bade them soon petition,
The intervention of the Virgin's grace ;
While he himself became their soul's physician,
And brought redemption for that happy race,
Though when the wretches spurn'd the truth, he taught
them,

He ceased to tutor them, and hotly fought them.

LXXXIX.

Refusing to be saved he shot them down,
Praying the while the Virgin's kind assistance ;
With now a smile and prayer, and now a frown,
He preach'd the truth in spite of all resistance ;
The converts were ensured a heavenly crown,
To make it sure, were sent a little distance,
Where they were shot, as the good priests express it,
That they might in a proper time possess it.

XC.

Oh ! Pious Ponce, how pleasant were thy cares !
'Tis very strange the savage should refuse,
The blessed boon of faith thy hand prepares,
And in his maddest desperation choose,
Rather the solace of his pagan pray'rs,
His woodland temple, wet with nightly dews,
To thy new creed, sustained by shot and rack,—
Pikes cross'd within the abdomen and back !

XCI.

Poor Savages ! that could not understand
'Till slain, how very greatly they were wrong ;
How they rebell'd against a heav'nly hand,
For peace too heavy and in war too strong ;
Looking with evil eye upon the hand
That slew ;—and cursing to the last the tongue,
That ordered the dread sacrifice—not knowing,
How pleasant was the journey they were going.

XCII.

Or if converted—thus the argument—

With souls already fitted up for heaven.

With a full faith in every sacrament,

Their truth made sure, their evil deeds forgiven ;

They might—how strong the fear!—with human bent

Fall from the faith if farther time were given ;

'Twas Mercy that first fitting for the altar,

Provided, the next instant, shot and halter.

XCIII.

Sufficient is the evil for the day :—

Our Canto here must finish. We have shown

Our hero in the new world, on his way,

Making himself by christian practice known ;

The reader will please fancy some delay ; *

His task is hard—his journey scarce begun ;

Months pass and years, 'midst scuffles, strifes and scratches,

Before our Don devours the Apatatchies ;

XCIV.

Or they devour the Don. Meanwhile, fair eyes,

Ye that have traced this desultory strain,

Sweet sleep be on ye ;—pleasant visions rise,

Your senses soothe, your fancies all enchain ;

The wizard world where still our progress lies,

Unfold, with all its pomp of pride and pain,

Its forests, streams, that woo the timorous glance,

Brave chiefs, bright maids—its rich realm of romance.

END OF CANTO SECOND.

THE ANCIENT REGIME.*

A New Novel.

BY G. P. R. JAMES, ESQ.,

Author of 'The Gypsy,' 'The Robber,' 'The Gentleman of the Old School,' etc. etc. etc.

First American Reprint.

The lady who had been kneeling before the cross had, during the latter part of this brief dialogue, come close to the speakers; and Annette, though looking principally towards the person who addressed her, had remarked a strange degree of agitation in his female companion. She was not a little surprised and confounded, however, when, at the words she had last spoken, the lady—giving way to some internal emotion, which seemed suddenly to overpower all her efforts to resist it—cast herself upon Annette's neck, and kissing her again and again, mingled her caresses with many tears, in which joy and sorrow had both evidently a part.

In vain the gentleman who accompanied her laid his hand upon her arm, saying, 'Remember, oh, remember!' and the other lady coming up, exclaimed, 'Have a care, dear madam, have a care.'

The lady's emotions were evidently not to be restrained; and she wept upon Annette's bosom, sobbing as if her heart would break, and from time to time pressing her lips upon her cheek and upon her brow. Then again she would dash the drops from her eyes, and gaze in the young lady's face, and then would burst into tears, and lean her head upon her shoulder.—On her part, as may well be supposed, Annette was agitated as well as surprised. She knew not, she could not divine what was the cause of the emotion that she beheld; but yet there was something in that lady's look, and tone, and manner, which awakened strange feelings in her heart—feelings of tenderness, and interest, and affection, which she could not account for; and, greatly moved herself, all she could say, was, 'What is it? Pray tell me what is it? What is the meaning of all this?'

Nobody answered her for some time; while the gentleman whispered a few words from

time to time to the lady, who was thus strangely agitated, and endeavored gently to draw her away. At length, however, he said, in reply to Annette's repeated question, 'You are very like this lady's daughter, mademoiselle, whose name was Annette also, so that the sight of you and the sound of that name have troubled her a little. She seems to forget, for the time, that you are not the young lady she lost. She will be better in a moment or two, and then will be sorry for having agitated you.'

Annette looked at the lady's dress; and tho' that of the gentleman might certainly pass for mourning, his fair companion was habited in all the bright and delicate colors which were then fashionable in the Parisian world. There was not much time, however, for observation, for the lady now seemed to recover herself; and gazing upon Annette with a look of sad but deep interest, she said in a tone of greater composure, 'I beg your pardon, young lady, I fear I have agitated you. You look like one that is very happy, and I pray to God that you may never know unhappiness.'

'I am very happy,' replied Annette, 'and I can scarcely foresee any thing that should make me unhappy, for I have the kindest and the best of guardians, who leaves nothing undone to insure my present and my future happiness.'

'Is he kind to you?' exclaimed the lady eagerly. 'Is he kind to you? Then may God of heaven bless him!—may Heaven bless,'—she added, more composedly, 'every one who is kind to those who are placed under their charge!'

As she thus spoke, the gentleman again whispered something to her, and seemed to urge her eagerly, for she replied, at length, 'Well, well, I will come—but remember, it is but a moment

* Continued from page 656.

out of life;' and again turning to Annette, she added, 'Forgive me, sweet girl, if I have frightened and agitated you: we shall meet again, I trust, some time, even in this world, so pray, remember me.'

'I will—indeed, I will, dear lady,' replied Annette: 'but by what name can I remember you?'

The gentleman held up his finger to her, as if to beg her to ask no questions; and the lady, after gazing in her face earnestly, once more embraced her, kissing her cheek again and again. Then turning away with bitter tears, she re-entered the carriage, merely murmuring the words, 'Adieu, adieu!' The other lady then kissed Annette's cheek likewise, saying in a low tone, 'You may some day know more;' and the gentleman returning from the side of the carriage bade her adieu respectfully ere he withdrew.

When he had handed in the last of the two ladies, Annette was not a little surprised to hear him turn to the coachman and say, as if he were thoroughly acquainted with every step of the country round, 'As soon as you have passed the castle gates, take the second broad road to the left, and go on as fast as you can till you reach the town of Maur.'

Thus saying, he sprang into the vehicle, shut the door behind him, and the coachman driving on, the whole party were soon out of sight. Annette walked slowly back to the chateau, to tell the Count of Castelnau what had occurred; but to her surprise she found, that, contrary to his usual habits, he had gone out on horseback in the middle of the day, and had not even said when he would return.

CHAPTER XII.

It was many hours before the Count returned to the chateau; when he did so, he entered the room where Annette was sitting with his usual calm and sedate step, and with a brow on which it was scarcely possible to perceive that there was any emotion, either angry, sorrowful, or joyous. As much as he ever smiled, he smiled on greeting the child of his adoption; but as soon as he had seated himself, he despatched the servant, who threw open the door of the saloon for him, to summon the porter of the great gates to his presence. The Count had passed the man as he entered; and the summons seemed to him so strange, and was so unusual, that though his master was kind and placable, he turned somewhat pale at the thought of having excited his anger.

'Who has been here since I went out, Victor,' said the count in a mild tone, as soon as he appeared.

'No one, my lord,' replied the porter; 'not a soul has passed the gates but mademoiselle, and the boy from the fish ponds with some fine carp.'

'Indeed!' replied the Count:—'bethink yourself, Victor; for I wish you to be very accurate.'

The man still remained firm in the same story, however; and the Count then asked if

the boy from the fish ponds had gone back again.

'Oh yes, directly, my lord,' replied the porter. 'When he had passed the gates and crossed the court, he took the fish to the wicket at the buttery door, where Francois, the cook's man, took them from him; and he came back directly.'

The count mused for a moment or two, and then inquired, 'Have you remarked any one pass by the gates of the chateau? I saw the fresh marks of carriage-wheels as I came along the road.'

'There was a carriage, my lord, about three hours ago,' replied the porter, 'with three brown horses and a grey one.'

'What were the colors of the liveries?' said the count.

'There were no liveries at all, monseigneur,' replied the porter: 'the coachman had a grey coat on, and a club wig as thick as my arm; but there was not one single lacky with the coach.'

In answer to some farther questions from his master, he proceeded to say that the vehicle had driven past as fast as possible, without pausing for a moment, even to let the party which it contained take a view of the castle, which was a high misdemeanor in the porter's eyes; the chateau of Castelnau being, in his estimation, the very finest edifice that the skill and ingenuity of man ever succeeded in raising from the earth. The information, however, seemed to satisfy the count, who nodded his head, saying, 'That will do;' and the porter, well contented with the event of his interrogation, retired from the presence of his lord.

Annette had longed to speak and detail all she knew of the people, in the carriage; but naturally courtesy had prevented her from interrupting the count till he had done; and then before she could speak, he turned to her saying, 'Something very strange has occurred to me to-day, Annette.'

'And to me also,' she replied, with a smile; but I interrupt you, my dear father. What were you saying?'

'Merely,' he answered, 'that something very strange has occurred, which, unless it be explained hereafter, I suppose I must look upon as the silliest of all idle jests. I received a letter almost immediately after you left me yesterday, calling me to Figeac upon important business. The matter to be treated of, namely the purchase of the neighboring estate of Merle, was distinctly mentioned. My own lawyer and notary, I was told, would both meet me at the inn, and, in fact, there was no room to suspect that I was deceived. I therefore set out as the letter requested me; but found nobody waiting, and no sign of preparation for my coming. This struck me as strange; but after waiting half an hour, lest men should say I am impatient, I sent for the notary, who lives in the town, you know, and found that he had not the slightest acquaintance with the matter. The lawyer was then sent for, and as he lives as far off as Lavignac, I was detained long before he came. When he

did at length appear, I found that he was as ignorant of the whole transaction as the notary, and, mounting my horse, I rode back hither as fast as possible. But say, my child, what is this strange thing that has happened to you which you thus speak of? You have not been robbed, I trust, my Annette? For one can surely walk forth in peace on the banks of the Selle, if any where.'

'Oh no,' replied Annette, 'nothing of that kind, but something, if not as unpleasant, at least as unusual,' and she proceeded to relate all that had occurred to her. If she softened any thing, it was not intentionally, and the count obtained a very accurate knowledge of all that had taken place.

As he listened, his countenance for once was moved; and Annette could see much agitation in his look: more, indeed, than she had ever seen upon his face before. Ere she had done, the count had started up from his seat, and began pacing up and down the room. Annette was astonished and alarmed to see such emotion in one so calm; and rising also, she approached and twined her beautiful arms round her father by adoption, saying in an anxious tone, 'I fear that my story has grieved you: I hope I have not done wrong.'

'Far from it, my dear child,' replied the count: 'you could but act as you did act; but still, there may be many matters in the tale that may, and that do grieve me. You know, Annette, that you are not my child; you know, however, that you are as much the child of my love as if you were one of my own offspring, and you can guess how terrible it would be for me to lose you.'

'Oh, but that will never be,' cried Annette. 'You do not think that any one could persuade me to leave you?'

The abbe looked in her face and smiled. He smiled, partly because the assurance gave him pleasure; and yet, strange to say, it was partly because he knew how vain such an assurance was. He did not deceive himself: he knew the time might come, and probably would come, when even deeper and stronger affections than those which bound Annette to him would take possession of her heart, and when without loving him less, she would love another more, and of course follow the strongest attachment. He smiled, however, kindly; and as he gazed in that lovely face for a moment, sensations, regrets, visions, if they may be so called, crossed his mind, from which he instantly turned away his thoughts. In that brief space of time, however, the tempting spirit which ever lies at the bottom of the human heart, seized the moment of tenderness to whisper, that he might have been very happy with Annette, not as the child of his adoption, but as the bride of his heart if years and circumstances had permitted such a thing to be possible. It is a peculiar characteristic of all the suggestions of the dark and subtle enemies of God and man, that each word which the heart is weak enough to receive is written in characters of flame that can never be erased, but which still remain clear and distinct when-

ever the mind rests upon them; till line after line is added thereunto by the persevering fiend, and the temptation becomes overpowering and complete. This was the first time that such a thought had ever crossed the count's mind, and he instantly turned away his eyes from it, as if it were an absolute profanation. He almost scorned himself to have admitted the very idea of it into his mind; yet it had an effect upon him—but that effect was, for the time at least, noble, and high, and pure. From that day forth he became somewhat less familiar with his adopted child. He would kiss her brow and cheek when they met, or when they parted, but he touched not her lips, he held her not to his bosom, as he had been accustomed to do: he felt as if it would be unholy so to do, after that thought once entered his heart; and though it was a painful punishment for one involuntary idea, yet he regarded it as a penance, and endured it with firmness. But he did more, as we shall soon see, when I return to the course of the story, which I have somewhat outrun already.

It very rarely happens, indeed, that a conversation of great interest proceeds to its close without interruption. There seems a fatality in it; and every one must have felt how trifles of the most unimportant kind, how importunate babblers and frivolous excoombs, are constantly permitted, or sent by fate, to break in upon those conferences on which hangs the weal or woe of our whole existence. The conversation between the Count de Castelnau and Mademoiselle de St. Morin had just reached the point at which we stopped in detailing it, when, from the window of the saloon, the count beheld a carriage with six beautiful horses, together with manifold lackeys on horseback and foot, enter the gates, which had been thrown open to admit them, and pass onward across the court to the principal door of the chateau.

His countenance resumed all its calmness in a moment. 'This is the family of Cajare, Annette,' he said: 'I heard they had arrived when I was at Figeac; but I dreamed not they would have made us a visit to-day, and could well have spared it. We must do the best to entertain them, however; for courtesy is a duty, my dear child, even to those we do not like or esteem.'

'Oh, I dislike Madame de Cajare very much,' said Annette.

'And I her husband as much,' replied the abbe.

Speeches like these but too often precede, in the false and hollow-hearted world in which we live, the entrance of visitors who are received with the more marked and flattering attention, with bright smiles and professions of delight.—Such, however, was not the case with the Count de Castelnau and Annette de St. Morin. The first advanced to meet his guests with slow and stately politeness, inquired after the health of the marquis and marchioness, trusted they had been well since he had seen them, now a period of two years, and hoped that they had greatly enjoyed the pleasures of Paris, but did not even express pleasure at seeing them.

'Ah, Monsieur de Castelneau,' said the lady, in a languid tone, 'you know that these-dreadful vapors from which I suffer never leave me much happiness. If there be anything that I can hope for in life, it is but to pass my days in a gentle melancholy, without being assailed by any deep grief or great misfortune.—Ah! Mademoiselle de St. Morin, how charming you are! I declare you become more lovely every day. Why during the last few months what a change and improvement has taken place in your beauty!'

Annette colored slightly, and replied courteously, but still coldly. The marquise, however, who was always quite satisfied with every thing she did herself, perceived in Annette's manner but that graceful indifference which is always cultivated in courts and great cities by those persons who, having nothing in heart or mind to distinguish them, are forced to make the most of those accidental circumstances of rank and fortune which they really possess or assume.—Such, indeed, was the combination of graces of person and demeanor, with a chilling coldness which could not be concealed in Annette's reception of the Marchioness de Cajare, that the latter lady marvelled in her own heart, and asked herself where that country girl could have acquired such a distinguished air and manner.

While the two ladies had thus been conversing, Monsieur de Castelneau had been engaged in paying some attention to the marquis; and he now turned round, saying to Annette, 'My dear child we are to be honored with the company of Monsieur and Madame de Cajare to-night: they will do us the honor of supping with us, and sleeping at the chateau. You had better summon good Donnine, and give orders that apartments be immediately prepared for our distinguished guests.'

Madame de Cajare and Monsieur de Cajare made a thousand formal apologies; declared that Mademoiselle de St. Morin would think them the most rude and unceremonious people in the world; but explained that they were on their way to pay a visit to the small town of Fons, and that one of their horses having cast a shoe, and detained them till that late hour, Madame de Cajare was far too timid to pass through the woods in the growing obscurity which was now fast falling over the world.

This statement might be true or it might not but the Count de Castelneau certainly did not believe it. However, old Donnine, having been summoned to Annette's aid now appeared in a gown of rich silk brocade, attired with infinitely more smartness than her mistress, though withal in garments well suited to her age; and Annette, having spoken a word or two to her faithful old attendant, quitted the room with her for a moment, to insure that every thing should be done to make their unexpected guests comfortable.

As soon as the young lady and the good old nurse were gone, Madame de Cajare exclaimed, 'What a charming creature!' and the count, with a certain spice of malice, which remained from his former habits notwithstanding all his

efforts, chose to misunderstand, and applied the words of the marquise to the good old Donnine.

'A very charming creature, indeed,' he replied, in a grave and somewhat solemn tone: 'she was first my ward's nurse, and has since been raised to the dignity of *gouvernante* of the chateau.'

The marquise explained, and the count bowed, but gave no farther encouragement to the praises of Annette. The evening passed by, upon the whole, cheerfully: the marquis himself, if he could not be called either a gay, a witty, or a sensible man, being overloaded with the phrases and the common-places of the world and the times. There was no subject on earth in regard to which he could not say something; and being neither diffident of his own powers, nor slow in delivering his own opinions, he himself supplied conversation of a certain kind wherever he went. He neither required nor accepted much assistance, very often answering his own questions as soon as they were asked; and the count found it very easy to entertain a person who was thus willing to play two hands in a game of chit-chat with himself. The marquis tried hard, in the course of the evening, to induce his host to play with him; for gambling was at that time a disease in the city of Paris, with which Monsieur de Cajare was very much afflicted. The count, however, remained firm, and declined, saying, with one of his doubtful smiles, that he had left off gaming when he quitted the church. The want of that sort of entertainment might have made the evening seem somewhat long to the guests of the chateau de Castelneau, had not the marquise, who perhaps might have some suspicion that her husband wished for a private conversation with his entertainer, retired to her apartment almost immediately after supper, accompanied by Mademoiselle de St. Morin, to do the honors of the house.

No sooner was she gone than Monsieur de Cajare laid regular siege to the mind of the count, seeking to draw from him, by one means or another, some account of Annette, and her prospects in life. He began by accounting for the absence of his daughter, who would be so delighted, he assured the count, to cultivate the acquaintance of Mademoiselle de St. Morin, by stating that she had remained at the chateau of Cajare in order to receive her brother the baron, who was expected every hour from Paris. He then proceeded once more to comment upon Annette's beauty; but the count listened in silence, without even replying by a look.

At length the marquis ventured upon a bold stroke, and exclaimed, as if he had known well the person of whom he was speaking, 'Ah, poor Monsieur de St. Morin! he was in very bad circumstances, I fear, when he died.'

'Annette's father was not rich,' replied the count.

'I feared so—I feared so,' said the marquis; 'he was an excellent man.'

'A very good man indeed,' replied the count, with the same cynical smile.

'I fear he has not left her very well provided for,' said the marquis.

Monsieur de Castelneau had a very great inclination to not answer at all, as he saw clearly through the views and purposes with which these suppositions were put forward. The evil spirit did not lose the opportunity, and instantly suggested the question, 'shall I promote by any means even by a word, the estrangement and the separation from myself of a being who has been for eighteen years the sunshine of my home and the light of my eyes? shall I aid in uniting her to another by those tender ties which can bind her to me?' But then the better spirit resumed its sway in a moment, and he said to himself, 'Why should I stay it?—why should I retard it even by a minute?—Would I deprive her of all those blessings that I myself have never known—home and happiness, and sweet domestic love? Would I thus repay her for having given comfort and consolation, ay, and almost even cheerfulness, to a wrung and sorrowful heart during eighteen years? No, no! Though, if this man's son be like his father, she is no bride for him, yet I may as well make known to the greedy and covetous world that she is not the dowerless creature that people suppose.'

Thought, which like the fairy, compasses the round earth 'ere the Leviathan can swim a league,' had been as rapid as usual in conveying all these ideas through the mind of the count; so that the marquis remarked nothing farther than one of those slight pauses which often preceded the reply of Monsieur de Castelneau to any thing that was said.

I really do not know, replied the count, at length, what you consider not well provided for, Monsieur de Cajare. A gentleman of your great wealth and importance may consider Annette's fortune a mere trifle; but her dower will amount, at least, to sixty thousand livres per annum, perhaps to more; and that will always enable her, as a single woman, to live in comfort, even if she should not marry.*

'Oh, but she will marry to a certainty, monsieur,' exclaimed Monsieur le Comte de Cajare whose eyes sparkled with eagerness to secure the prize for his son: 'I am sure you could make an advantageous match for her at any time you thought fit to seek it.'

'I shall in no degree seek it, Monsieur de Cajare,' replied the count, quickly, in order to prevent the other from saying more at that moment. 'You know I was some time ago in the neighboring country of England. They are a strange mad headed people, as you are well aware.—Torn to pieces by factions in policy and religion; but amongst other odd notions, they have a belief, not universal, but very general amongst them, that a woman has something to do with her own marriage and that it is consequently better to consult her inclinations. This I believe to be the reason why, in England, one man's wife is not always another man's mistress, as in France.* I liked the system so much, that

I long ago determined Mademoiselle de St Morin should marry whom she liked, and nobody but whom she liked; reserving to myself, as her guardian, the right of refusing her to any one whose morals, temper, or habits were certain to make her unhappy;—but you seem tired, Monsieur de Cajare, and would, I am sure, wish to retire. Allow me to show you the way.—Jean! Pierre! Mathieu! here bring lights. Lights for Monsieur le Marquis de Cajare;' and then, after conducting Monsieur de Cajare to his apartments with a most formal politeness, he retired to his own chamber with his usual quiet step.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Marquis de Cajare did not quit the chateau of Castelneau without pressing the count and his fair ward to visit his dwelling. Somewhat to Annette's surprise the count did not hesitate a moment, but accepted the invitation at once, fixed the day for a visit, and seemed well disposed to be on terms of intimacy with a family which she knew he despised at heart. This sudden change in one whose character and demeanor showed in general an unalterable firmness, might well appear strange to poor Annette; but the secret was that, as we have shown, Monsieur de Castelneau had undergone a struggle with himself, and had gained a triumph.

In such circumstances there are few men who do not suffer the first moment of victory to carry them too far; and at that time the count would willingly have given the hand of the fair girl whom he had brought up from infancy to any worthy man who sought it. Feelings of this kind, however, are generally as evanescent as they are strong; and before the third morning after the departure of the marquis and his family had arrived, the count began to regret the promise he had given.

The following day was to be spent at Cajare, and Monsieur de Castelneau would not make any false excuse; but he could not help commenting to Annette, in a few sarcastic words, upon the character of those they were about to visit. The marquis, he said, was a charlatan in his follies as well as in his wit; the marchioness as much a quack in sentiment as her husband was in the want of it. 'I have had opportunities of seeing,' he continued, 'that this vice is hereditary. His father was the same as himself: the daughter has lost nothing of the gift by transmission. It is clearly an heir-loom, and the only one in the family—the son, surely, cannot be without it.'

Annette made no reply, for it was seldom that she saw her kind guardian in such a mood, and she loved him less in it. In truth, he had carefully restrained his own sarcastic nature ever since Annette had been with him; for he was unwilling to show her in one whom she loved and revered an example of anything that he did not wish her to adopt. After a moment's his sarcastic habit of expression, as will be seen whenever 'The Maxims of the Count de Castelneau' shall be given to the public.

* It must be remembered that this cynical observation of Monsieur de Castelneau applied to the morals of a century ago, and even then was a great deal too general and sweeping although quite in character with

pause, however he added, 'it would not surprise me, my Annette, if this youth were to become a suitor after your hand.'

Annette smiled and shook her head. There is an instinctive perception, regarding all the natural affections, in the mind of women, which though they often willingly bind themselves to ardent love—as we shut our eyes against the full sunshine—yet shows them many a finer shade and more delicate hue of the same passion in a moment be it concealed however it may. In the few words the count had spoken, Annette perceived at once, that there were apprehensions in his own bosom lest she should be sought and won by the young Baron de Cajare; and though she tried not to investigate why the thought might be painful to him—whether, because he thought the suitor unworthy of her, or because he liked not the prospect of losing her society—that answering smile and shake of the head spoke plainly, and were intended to speak, 'There is no fear he should succeed.'

The count understood the smile, and bent down his eyes upon the ground with a meditative look, not very well satisfied that even a part of his feelings should be detected, and more determined than ever to overcome them. But as the evil spirit is well aware that man's mind is a texture of ideas, he is satisfied with adding new ones of an evil kind, and working them intimately in and out, as a weaver works into the warp the thread upon his shuttle. Every time that the mind rests upon wrong, a new throw of that shuttle is taken, and the thread that it bears is the more thoroughly blended with the whole web of our thoughts.

On the subsequent day, early in the morning, the count and his adopted child set forth, and about an hour afterwards reached the great house of glass and gilding called the Chateau de Cajare. Their approach had been observed by the inhabitants; and on the steps leading up to the chief entrance, appeared the Marquis de Cajare himself, with a young man of some six or seven and twenty years of age, splendidly dressed in the military costume of the day. He was handsome in countenance, graceful in person, not the least like the Marquis de Cajare in any respect; with an expression which, though not particularly marked in any way, was decidedly agreeable and prepossessing. He was rather grave than otherwise: there was none of the light smile about his lip which generally characterised the vain youth of the metropolis; and as he bowed low on being introduced to the count and Mademoiselle de St. Morin, and followed with the former, while his father led the latter into the chateau by the tips of the fingers his calm and gentlemanly demeanor, his handsome person, and superior tone of manners, made the count feel ten times more uncomfortable than if he had displayed all the idle frivolity and licentious emptiness of a *petit-maitre* of those days.

Still, however, the Count de Castelneau struggled against such emotions; and as he walked on slowly up the steps, answering little more than monosyllables to the courteous words which the young officer addressed to him, he might be

seen once or twice to close his teeth hard, as if to keep down the feelings that were within him. Before they had passed the threshold of the chateau, however, he had again triumphed over himself, and with admirable patience suffered himself to be led by Madame de Cajare and her daughter to take breakfast in a *bosquet*, which the Marchioness informed him was dedicated to love and pensiveness. There was a fountain and an urn, and two or three Cupids, very naked, and somewhat over-fat about the lower part of the back, and there were inscriptions in verse below from the flowing pen of Mademoiselle de Cajare. The metre was not very good, nor the poetry; but there was a certain spice of wit in the composition, which was employed in such a manner as to leave the reader in doubt whether the fair writer was laughing at the Cupids or not.

Monsieur de Castelneau, on his part read the verses, and treated them much in the same way as Mademoiselle treated the Cupids, commenting upon them in a strain which left it very doubtful whether he did or did not admire them.

In the meantime, Annette, after having been welcomed in rapture by Mademoiselle de Cajare, had been conducted to the *bosquet* by the marquis. His son, also, had fallen back to her side; and though he did not press any very great attentions upon her, yet all he did say was gentlemanly, and high toned. Annette was struck and pleased; and certainly, if the Count de Castelneau had contrived a plan for making her fall in love with the Baron de Cajare, he could not have laid out the events more cunningly for that purpose, than by drawing such a picture of that gentleman as he had suggested to her mind, and then presenting such an extraordinary contrast in reality. Annette de St. Morin, however—though, from her inexperience, from the warmth and tenderness of her heart, from a bright imagination, and a thousand other qualities of the mind, she might very well fall in love at first sight—paradoxical as it may seem, was not one to fall in love easily. It required many high qualities to win her affection, though her love would have been given in a moment, as soon as her heart was satisfied that those qualities were really possessed. Such was not the case with Monsieur de Cajare; though, in manners, appearance, conduct, he was altogether different from what she had expected, his conversation did not afford a sufficient insight into his thoughts to convince her that the heart was high, and noble, and generous, the mind bright, pure, and unsullied.

No event of importance took place throughout the day: to Annette it passed happily and cheerfully enough: indeed more so than any day she had spent in general society; for her happiest hours had always been those which she had passed with her father by adoption. The young officer, who contrived now to be a good deal by her side, had evidently a finished and refined taste, had an intimate acquaintance with the works of art in various countries, and had seen and known many of the most distinguished men of the day. He expressed his opinions, and he

communicated his information, pleasantly and unobtrusively; and withal, he had that intelligent look, that meaning smile, which seems to pre-suppose a familiarity with our internal thoughts and feelings, and soon makes friends with the spirit within us.

Annette, on her part, neither encouraged nor repelled his attention; but, as I have said, the day passed pleasantly for her, till she saw very evidently that the Count de Castelnau was uneasy. She did not fully understand why this should be, but felt inclined to believe that he knew more of the Baron de Cajare than he had stated, and that what he did know was disadvantageous to that young nobleman. As soon as she perceived this, she listened with less satisfaction to the baron's conversation, and attached herself more closely to the side of the count.—Monsieur de Castelnau remarked that she did so, and was pleased, it must be acknowledged, at the result; but at the same time was rather mortified that she had discovered his uneasiness. He did not wish that uneasiness to be perceived, and would only have prevented her conversing farther with the young officer upon the condition of doing so without appearing to do it. To remove the impression as much as possible, however, his warmth of manner towards the baron increased as Annette became more cold; and he ended, ere they took their departure, by inviting him in a hospitable tone to the chateau of Castelnau. The young officer bowed, and promised to take advantage of the invitation; but the next day passed over without his coming, and the next. The third day he appeared; and the count, pleased with his apparent indifference, treated him hospitably, and gave him no discouragement.

Advanced thus far, the Baron de Cajare did not fail to press his acquaintance more rapidly; sometimes he saw the count alone, sometimes the count and Annette; but there grew a tenderness in his manner towards Mademoiselle de St. Morin, a softness in his voice, a look of deep and thoughtful interest, which, every time that the count saw him, made his heart ache with painful anticipations. He struggled boldly and firmly against his own feelings, however. He compared himself firmly with the young baron; and when he asked himself which was best calculated to win and to retain the love of a young, bright, ardent being, like Annette de St. Morin, he could not but acknowledge that it was not himself, though he felt within him depth of feeling and powers of mind which he knew the other did not possess. He determined that he would do nothing to stay the course of events; but every step in their progress now gave him agony. Although many painful thoughts were but too familiar with his mind, these seemed more painful still, or, at all events—piled up as they were upon other things—they seemed to render the load upon his bosom intolerable, and yet he would not fly from those thoughts; but, on the contrary, gave himself up to them in manifold solitary and painful fits of musing. He would walk forth long by himself; he would shut himself in his chamber from all society, even from

that of Annette. He would ride out far through the lonely woods, or over the wild hills and moors, and he would commune with and task his own heart, and accuse himself of gross, and bitter, and shameful selfishness; and often would he ask himself whether it were really possible that he was animated by any coarse and common passion towards a creature so pure, so sweet, so good, whom he had loved as his own child from infancy up to womanhood.

There, however, his own heart acquitted him, and the judge was just. No, he said, all that he sought was, that she should not leave him; that she should not love another better than him; that she should not take from him, to give to any one else, that affection which was the sole possession which his spirit valued, the only thing that he had ever really sought, or cared for, or loved, or prized. It had been balm to him when his heart was wounded and bleeding; it had been as a beautiful flower upon his pathway when all the rest of life had seemed a desert; it had been his one consolation, his hope, his trust; it had been, in short, his existence, for what is existence without affection?

One day, when he had been thus thinking for many an hour, as he rode through some of the most beautiful parts of the neighboring country, without taking any note of tree, or stone, or rock, or river, he returned at a quicker pace to the chateau of Castelnau, and found the Baron de Cajare sitting with Annette alone.

There was a slight flush on Mademoiselle de St. Morin's cheek, and the young officer was looking upon the floor, somewhat pale; but the count, though he paused a moment as he entered, and looked from the one to the other, made no observation; and seated himself near the window, bearing such an aspect that conversation was renewed with difficulty, and each subject was dropped again as soon as it was started. At length the baron rose, and taking his leave, mounted his horse in the court-yard, and rode away from the chateau. The count watched him from the window with a knitted brow and thoughtful eye; and then turning to Mademoiselle de St. Morin, he said, 'Annette, my dear child —'

But almost as he spoke, he turned deadly pale — put his hand to his heart and then to his head — grasped ineffectually at the arm of a chair that stood near, and fell forward fainting upon the ground. Servants were speedily called: physicians were procured from Figac and Cahors; but before they arrived, the count, having been stretched on a sofa, had recovered his recollection, and declared himself quite well. It proved, however, that he was not so; and he soon found that such was the case when he attempted to rise.

When the physicians came, they declared that he was not only seriously ill, but in much danger. It matters not what was the barbarous name that they gave to his complaint, their judgment was correct; and for nearly six weeks he was not permitted to quit the house, or to take any exercise but in moving slowly from his bedroom to the saloon. He was forbidden to

read or to write; and the hours would have passed sadly and slowly, had it not been for the presence of Annette de St. Morin. She read to him, she sang to him, she played to him, she gave up her whole thoughts to him alone. For many weeks she never set her foot beyond the doors, nor did she see any one but good old Donnine, who was the partner of her toils.—Several times the family of Cajare applied for admittance when Annette was with the count, and twice they begged to speak with Mademoiselle de St. Morin if the count could not see them; but Annette distinctly and markedly refused.

The days passed on, as they will pass in sickness or in health, flying like the shadow of a cloud, and leaving nothing behind. Some gradual improvement took place in the health of the count; and one day, after what seemed an effort to command himself, he asked whether any one had lately called at the chateau. Annette replied that there had been no one.

‘Not the family of Cajare?’ he said.

‘Not for ten days,’ replied Annette calmly.

‘Not the baron?’ asked the count, more eagerly.

‘Oh no!’ replied Annette, with a bright and happy smile. ‘Thank Heaven, he has been gone to his regiment this fortnight.’

‘What mean you, my dear child?’ said the count, almost rising from the sofa. ‘You seem happy that he is gone.’

‘I am well pleased,’ she said, ‘though not exactly happy; for it matters little to me whether he went or stayed, in truth; but still it is pleasant he should be away.’

‘What has he done to offend you, Annette?’ demanded the count, gazing inquiringly on her face. ‘He must have done something to make you angry, by the way you speak.’

‘Oh no, my dear father!’ replied Annette—for by that endearing name she always called him—‘he did nothing to make me angry; but he spoke, the last time I saw him, of the joy I would have, some day, in quitting this dull old chateau, and leaving the tiresome society to which I have been so long confined, for all the pomp, and wit, and brightness of the capital.’

The count gazed upon her face for two or three minutes without making any reply; but there was a well-pleased smile upon his countenance which spoke satisfaction and relief.

‘He knew you not, my Annette,’ he replied at length, ‘he knew you not; and without other comment he sunk back upon the cushions of the sofa. But his health improved more rapidly from that day forward.’

CHAPTER XIV.

From time to time the Count de Castelneau had urged Annette not to deprive herself altogether of air and exercise on his account; but to go out either on horseback or on foot. She had always avoided doing so, however; and remained steadfast to her post as long as the least danger existed in the case of her friend and protector. Nor would she quit him till he was again permitted to read and to amuse himself; but when the physicians took off the prohibition

from his books, the count insisted that she should take exercise for one or two hours during each day. Nor did he do so without cause; for during the long course of his illness the color had somewhat faded from Annette’s cheek, and the brightness of her eye had been dimmed by anxiety and watching. To see him better, in itself, did her good; and one or two walks or rides through the forest soon brought back the rose to its sweet resting place. The count was delighted to see her look so much better, and now insisted that she should leave him more frequently than she had hitherto done, promising soon to join her in her rambles. On the fourth day after she had again begun to go out, Mademoiselle de St. Morin proceeded on her walk alone in the cool of the evening. It had been a bright sunshiny day, somewhat fatiguing from the great heat, and the world around seemed full of repose and calm tranquility. The birds of spring were yet in song, and the rich notes of the blackbird were heard all through the woods, although the nightingale was now silent. The sun softened down, like a buoyant heart that has just known enough of sorrow to be calm in its cheerfulness, peeped through the bolls of the tall trees, and poured its light underneath the green branches, gilding every inequality of the mossy carpet of the forest with warm streams of yellow light; but the fresh and balmy air of evening was abroad, and a thousand sweet scents were shaken from the wings of the wind. It was an evening to rejoice in, with the high, pure, holy rejoicing which raises the heart from God’s works to God himself, and glorifies his name as he has told us it may best be glorified. In the calm, and the stillness, and the freshness, and the brightness of that hour, in its perfume and its melody, there was a call to joy and adoration which the heart of Annette de St. Morin was not formed to resist. She walked on thinking of the beauty of the Almighty works, and of the goodness and greatness of Him who made them; all her sensations were joyful, and all her thoughts were praise.

Thus proceeded she till she came to the same spot where she had sat not very many weeks before, when she had been accosted by the party of travellers, whose strange demeanor seemed to have begun a new epoch in her existence.—There was the little cross and fountain, there the bright stream winding on its way, there the bank where she had been seated; and the whole was now filled sweetly with the soft light of the declining sun, the rays of which glittered on the bosom of the water, and seemed to dive for the pebbles at the bottom. The dark wood rose up behind, shrouding, as it were, that sweet spot in its sombre mantle. Annette placed herself where she had been seated before the arrival of the strangers; and the scene, of course, brought its recollections with it. Many a curious question and speculation came also in the train of memory; and she sat musing for about twenty minutes, and asking herself who could be the persons whom she had there seen?—what could be the real cause of the agitation which one of the party had displayed?

She was deep in this meditation, when she suddenly heard a sound close to her; and, turning suddenly round, she beheld, to her surprise and consternation, a gaunt she-wolf, followed by two young cubs. It was not the period of the year when those animals generally roam; but sometimes, from heat and want of water, they become very furious even in the midst of summer, especially in Auvergne and some of the midland districts of France. They usually fly, indeed, from any human being if not hard pressed, and if not fled from; but any sudden motion seems to excite their ferocity, and make them turn either to attack others or to defend themselves. Annette knew that such is the case; and had more than once seen a wolf in the forest without meeting any injury or suffering any alarm. At the moment, however, her nerves were somewhat unstrung by long attendance on her sick friend. The beast, too, was close to her, running fast, as if pursued by some one; and, giving way to terror, she started up with a quick scream.

The animal instantly sprang at her throat; but luckily caught the collar of the mantle which she wore in its teeth, and tore it off, only slightly grazing the skin. The violence of the attack, however, made the poor girl reel back against the tree and nearly fall. The wolf was in the very act of springing at her again, and the heart of poor Annette was faint with terror, when there came suddenly the sound of a shot, and the ferocious beast rolled over on its side.

It was not killed; and, though severely wounded, was struggling on its feet again with a fierce howl, when a gentleman on horseback galloped quickly up, sprang to the ground, and, setting his foot upon the body of the animal, held it firmly down. Mad with pain, it bit the heel of his boot so hard that he could scarcely shake it off; but, drawing his horse towards him by the rein which was over his arm, while he still held down the wolf with his foot, he took a pistol from the left-hand holster and discharged it into the furious animal's head. The wolf moved no more; but it was still with difficulty that he withdrew his heel from its jaws, as he turned to aid Mademoiselle de St. Morin, who had now sunk upon the ground, and was supporting herself against the bole of the tree.

Poor Annette, as may well be supposed, was well nigh fainting; and the effect of terror being very often, as we all know, more severe after the danger has passed away than before, for several minutes she could not speak, even to give one word of thanks, or reply to the many questions which were asked her by the gentleman who had come to her aid.

He treated her with all kindness, and care, and tenderness; brought water in his hand from the little fountain to sprinkle upon her temples and forehead; and although he gazed upon her with interest, and perhaps with admiration, yet his look was respectful, and such as Annette could have met at any time without casting down her eyes. He assured her again and again that there was no danger; and taking her hand, which still trembled very much, in order to call

her attention, he pointed to the wolf lying dead, saying, 'It can hurt nobody now, it has not hurt you already. Good Heaven!' he continued, seeing a drop or two of blood upon the part of her dress which covered her bosom. 'I fear it has hurt you! Let me carry you home for assistance! Surely you are Mademoiselle de St. Morin! Let me carry you home!'

He was about to raise her in his arms; but Annette prevented him by laying her hand upon his, and saying in a low tone, 'No, no, I am not hurt—only faint with fear—it is very foolish—I shall be better in a moment.'

The gentleman, who had knelt beside her for the purpose of lifting her from the ground, continued in the same posture, gazing upon her with much interest, and endeavoring, to the best of his power, to reassure her, but still expressing a fear that she was in some degree injured. 'No,' she said, speaking more freely after the pause of a moment or two, 'no, I can assure you, it is nothing. The wolf only tore my mantle at the first spring; but the second would have killed me if it had not been for your arrival. How can I ever thank you?'

'Oh, think not of it, dear lady!' the stranger replied; 'it was but a very small service, and one which I would have performed, of course, for the lowest peasant girl in the neighborhood. How much more gladly than for you!'

Annette smiled faintly, and looked up to the face of her deliverer, for the first time, supposing, from his words, that, though the voice was unknown to her, he must be some one with whom she was already acquainted; but the face was equally strange, though it was by no means a countenance to be forgotten when once beheld.

'I am ashamed,' said Annette, raising herself slowly, '—I am ashamed to acknowledge that I do not recollect the person of a gentleman who has rendered me so great a service, though from what you say, I suppose, of course, I have had the pleasure of meeting you before.'

'No, dear lady,' her companion replied; 'although I am a native of this part of France, circumstances have prevented me from ever forming your acquaintance; but I have heard much and often of Mademoiselle de St. Morin, from those who know and esteem her, and I can but say, that if I could have chosen the person in all France to whom I would most willingly have rendered such a service as this, I should have named yourself.'

Such courteous speeches were then so common in France that the stranger's words sounded in Annette's ears as a mere casual compliment. 'You are too kind,' she replied; 'but I can assure you that my guardian, the Count de Castelnau, who lives not far hence, will be most happy to thank you gratefully for the great service you have rendered me, and will do it much better than I can do it, though I feel the gratitude I owe you as deeply as any one can.'

'I fear, madam,' replied the stranger, 'that it will be impossible for me to visit the Count de Castelnau at the present time; but when you are well enough, I will accompany you so

far back towards the chateau as to insure that no farther evil shall befall you.'

'If it be not wrong of me to ask it then,' said Annette, 'may I inquire to whom I am thus indebted for my life?'

The stranger looked down upon the ground in silence for a moment or two, and then gazing up in her face with a peculiar smile, he replied, 'In answer to your question, dear lady, I might give you a false name were I so disposed; but I do not think falsehood is ever justified by any circumstances, and I would rather risk offending you, and seeming rude, by giving you no reply than any untrue one. Yet, if I judge of you rightly, you will forgive me when I tell you, it is necessary to my safety that my being in this part of the country should not be known.'

'I would forgive you, by all means,' replied Annette; 'but there is nothing to forgive, though of course I should have been glad, had you thought right, to know the name of him who has delivered me from a great danger—but be it exactly as you please.'

The stranger again cast down his eyes for a moment, and then answered in a somewhat sorrowful tone, 'I fear, notwithstanding, that you are a little offended.'

'No, indeed,' replied Annette, 'very far from it. I could of course only wish to know your name, sir, in order to place it, as it were, in the register of memory, coupled with the greatest service, perhaps, that has ever yet been rendered to me by any one.'

'Then you shall have it, lady,' replied the stranger, 'but not now. I will find means to see you before I quit this part of the country, and you will forgive me my silence now when you hear all my reasons for it.'

'Indeed,' answered Annette, smiling again, 'I will not let you diminish my feeling of obligation to you, sir, by persuading me that I have any thing to forgive. Whether we do meet again or not, I shall ever recollect the assistance you have this day rendered me with the deepest gratitude, and think of you as one who has saved my life.'

'Though you estimate the service more highly than it deserves,' replied the stranger, 'it is so pleasant to me that you should thus over-estimate it that I will not try to make you think otherwise. One thing, perhaps, you have indeed to thank me for,—which is the fact of having conquered a momentary weak fear of hurting you in the attempt to save you. As I was riding through the by-paths of the wood before I saw you, the wolf and its cubs ran on for some way before me. At the turn—up there by those holly bushes—I lost sight of the animal for an instant; but the next moment, hearing your scream, and galloping on, I beheld it flying at your throat. As soon as I heard your cry I had taken a pistol from the holster; but for a moment I hesitated to fire, for fear of missing the ferocious beast and hitting you. I soon saw, however, that there was no time to be lost: I rarely miss my mark, and did not in this instance, as you know; though had I been less apprehensive I might have killed the wolf at

the first shot, and then it would not have bit my heel in the way that it has done.'

Annette started with a look of fear and anxiety, and saw that the moss round the spot where the stranger's foot rested was stained for some way with blood.

'Oh! come to the chateau,' she said eagerly. 'Come to the chateau and have the wound attended to. I fear, indeed I fear that you are a good deal hurt.'

Her countenance expressed her apprehensions even more than her words; but the stranger only laughed, assured her that the bite was as a mere nothing and would be well in a few days.

'I will accompany you,' he said, 'till we come within sight of the chateau, dear lady. I see you are now well enough to walk home; and I can only say that I am most sincerely grateful to some indescribable expectation of I knew not what, which led me through this part of the forest to-day. To tell the truth,' he added, after a brief pause, accompanying his words with a gay frank smile, 'there might be some expectation—some hope, perhaps, of seeing Mademoiselle de St. Morin, though certainly there was neither expectation nor hope of even conversing with her, far less of rendering her any aid.'

There was something in the tone and the manner—in a slight touch of embarrassment which mingled with the frankness, in a degree of wavering in the voice and sparkling in the eye, that showed the words to be not a mere thing of course. The color rose slightly in Annette's cheek at the compliment which the stranger's speech implied; though there is many a woman who would have sought to make that compliment greater and more direct, by pretending not to understand it, Annette was not one of those. She shrunk from it as some plants do from even the most delicate touch; and she only replied, 'I think it would be much better for you to accompany me to the chateau, and have the wound dressed. You may perfectly trust to my kind guardian Monsieur de Castelnau; for he would betray no man, and far less one who has saved my life.'

The stranger, however, still resisted her entreaty; but walked on by Annette's side leading his horse by the bridle, and giving her assistance at every little rough spot of the forest road, though he did not absolutely offer her his arm to support her still agitated and wavering steps.

Annette did not construe such forbearance into any neglect of what was due to her as a lady, or into any want of kind consideration for her yet scarcely allayed terror. The stranger's manner was all courteous, and his words and tone so kind, so tender—if we may use that word in its proper senses of gentle and compassionate—that Mademoiselle de St. Morin felt there was nothing wanting in his demeanor to make her at ease by his side. There was, indeed, an expression of interest and admiration in his eyes when he looked upon her, which might have agitated her had his whole manner

not been even on the colder side of respect.—She would have taken his arm without the slightest hesitation had he offered it, but she did not think worse of him for refusing.

Thus they walked on somewhat slowly towards the chateau, sometimes speaking, but sometimes silent for several minutes. At length the stranger said rather abruptly, after an interval of thought, 'Might it not be better, Mademoiselle de St. Morin, not to mention at all to Monsieur de Castelneau what has occurred today?'

Annette started, and looked full in her companion's face; for she had imagined—why and wherefore it would be difficult to tell—perhaps from his countenance, which was noble and open—perhaps from his having rendered her an important service, and thus won gratitude on his side—but she had imagined and convinced herself that he was all that is frank and sincere. 'Oh no!' she replied eagerly, after that inquiring look; 'I always tell him every thing that occurs. I should be unworthy of the kindness he has ever shown me, if I could conceal any thing from him.'

'You mistake me, I think,' said the stranger with a smile. 'I only meant, till the count is better. I have heard that he is very ill; and one of the physicians who is attending him, and who also sees frequently a sick relation of my own, informed me that any thing which agitates Monsieur de Castelneau is likely to cause a relapse in his present state. You know best, however. I only feared that to hear of the great danger of one whom he loves—whom he must love—so dearly, might perhaps retard his recovery. But no one can judge better than you.'

The cloud cleared away from Annette's face in a moment; she felt that she had done her companion wrong in her own thoughts, and with the noble candor of her nature she hastened to acknowledge it.

'I beg your pardon,' she said, 'I did mistake you, and I am sorry for so doing; for I am sure you think as I do, that to a person who has always loved, and been kind, and generous, and good to us, as Monsieur de Castelneau has been to me—are in fact a duty.'

'Indeed I do, Mademoiselle de St. Morin,' replied the stranger warmly. 'There may be many people who admire you alone for your beauty, but it is for such feelings as those which you have just expressed that I can most admire you. It is for actions founded on such feelings that I have learnt to esteem you from my early youth.'

Mademoiselle de St. Morin colored at the stranger's words, although they were very pleasant to her ear; not so much because they were in praise of herself, as because they showed that her first impression of her companion's character was not incorrect. He marked the blood rising in her cheek, however, and hastened instantly to give another turn to what he was saying.

'I think,' he continued, 'that we may very easily lay down a rule for ourselves in setting out in life, by which we may satisfy our own

heart, and yet guard against the dangers of over-confidence. In dealing with others our maxim should be, perfect candor to all those who love us, who are frank with us, and whom we can esteem; reserve towards those whom we have no reason to trust, or any reason to distrust; but truth to all.'

'Oh, I agree with you heartily,' cried Annette, gazing up in the fine countenance of him who spoke those words, with one of those winning looks of pleasure that from such eyes as hers are hard to be resisted; and from that moment there were many of the cold and iron barriers which society raises up between strangers cast down for her and her companion.

They walked slowly on then, speaking together as if they had been old friends. Both felt happy in the communication thus established between them; both felt pleased and interested in discovering new things in each other's hearts, which harmonised well with the thoughts and feelings of their own. They walked slowly, I have said; but yet the time seemed very short ere, through the opening of the wood, they saw some of the detached towers of the chateau; and the stranger paused to take leave of Mademoiselle de St. Morin.

'I believe,' he said, 'that I must here bid you adieu. I need hardly add that I regret it much, for I have certainly passed an hour of very great happiness by your side.'

Annette cast her eyes down; she felt that she could have said the same, and on any former occasion the natural straight-forward candor of her heart would have made her do so at once.—But now for some reason, or rather I should say from some feeling which she could not account for, her lips would not utter such a confession, and she remained silent while her companion went on.

'And now, perhaps,' he continued, 'I am leaving you never to see you again. However, I trust that you will believe me, when I say that I shall ever recollect you, and the short, the too short time I have spent with you, as amongst the very brightest memories of a life which has had but too few of such sweet things to remember. It is very hard,' he added, with a sigh, 'that if in the midst of the great solitude of existence we do find some beings with whom we could joyfully spend many a long day, we are almost always sure to have but a short glimpse of them, and never to see them again. I am sure, Mademoiselle de St. Morin,' he went on, seeing the color flutter in her cheek; 'I am sure that you do not misunderstand me, nor think for one moment that I mean any thing but what is equally respectful and true towards you, or any thing indeed that even this very short acquaintance does not fully justify me in saying.'

'Oh, no, no,' replied the young lady, eagerly; 'it was not that! I only wish to tell you, and did not very well know how to say it, that I am very, very grateful for your kindness to me,—equally grateful to you, indeed, for saving my life, and for your kind and considerate conduct since; and I do hope and trust,' she continued,

growing bolder as she spoke, that, so far from never meeting again, we may meet often. I may add that it will be your fault if we do not for I can venture to assure you that the gates of the chateau of Castelnau will ever be open to you, and that I myself and my more than father will be very glad, to show you how grateful we are for what you have done in my defence.'

The stranger looked much gratified; but he replied, 'Do not, dear lady, do not tempt me too much; and, should I be prevented from taking advantage of so kind an invitation, do not, say that it is my fault; but believe on the contrary that it is my misfortune: and now, though every minute may be sweet, I will not detain you longer, but pray heaven to bless and keep you in its especial care.'

Thus saying, he took her hand respectfully and pressed his lips upon it; and she, wishing him good-bye, proceeded on her way towards the chateau, bearing with her feelings which she had never experienced before, but not such as to prevent her from acknowledging boldly to her own heart that she should be very sorry indeed if this first meeting with the stranger should be the last.

From this fact it will clearly be perceived by the learned reader—learned in that most difficult, obscure, and abstruse book, the human heart—that Annette was not in the least degree in love with her companion of the last half hour; for, had she been so, she would never have acknowledged any thing to her own heart at all, but would have courted, on the contrary, that sort of mental blindness to all that was passing in her own bosom, of which the bandage over Cupid's eyes is but a just emblem. However that may be, in the short space between the wood and the chateau, she asked herself several times whether it would, or would not be better to tell the count, in his present state of health, what had occurred to her. It were scarcely fair to ask whether—hidden from her own eyes in the deep recesses of the heart—any shy spirit put off upon her, like a coiner passing false money for real, one sort of motives for another.—Suffice it that her heart was too upright by nature to suffer one wish for concealment to affect her conduct; and before she had reached the gates of the chateau, she had made up her mind to tell the count the whole, but to do so carefully and cautiously for fear of alarming him.

CHAPTER XV.

Annette entered the saloon, where the count de Castelnau was stretched upon the sofa reading, with the mantle which the wolf had torn from her neck cast over her arm. The count laid down the book, and raised himself to speak with her; but the moment that he did so the penetrating eyes of strong affection discovered at once that something had gone wrong. 'Come hither, my Annette,' he cried. 'What is the matter? You are not well—your cheek is very pale, my dear child—your mantle torn, and blood upon your bosom.'

'Oh, it is nothing,' replied Annette smiling, and seeing all her plans of communicating her

intelligence with caution overthrown in a moment. 'It is nothing, I can assure you, my dear father. A little accident which I met with in the wood! It might have been more serious; but, as it is, no harm has happened.'

'But speak, Annette, speak!' said the count. 'What is it? It must have been something serious indeed to leave your cheek so pale.'

'Oh no, indeed,' she answered. 'I was frightened, but not hurt. The truth is, I met a wolf in the wood—'

'And he flew at you!' cried the count eagerly. 'He attacked you! Is it not so, Annette? How did you escape, my girl?'

'Nay, do not be alarmed,' said Annette: 'you see I am quite safe. It was an old wolf followed by two young ones, and she did, as you think, fly at my throat: she caught my mantle in her teeth and tore it off, scratching me—not with her teeth, I think—but with the clasps of the mantle. She was springing at me again, however, when a gentleman rode up and shot her with a pistol which he took from his holsters. The animal was not quite dead, and bit his heel very severely; but I did not see much of what happened then, for I was nearly fainting.'

'The Baron de Cajare?' said the count. 'Was it the Baron de Cajare?'

'Oh, no!' exclaimed Annette; 'quite a different person.'

'Who then, who then?' asked Monsieur de Castelnau quickly.

'Nay, that I cannot tell,' replied his adopted child; 'for, although he was as courteous as he could be in all other things, he would not give his name; and he told me very plainly, when he had escorted me nearly to the chateau, that it was probable I should never see him again.'

'Indeed!' said the count. 'Some stranger travelling through the country perhaps.'

'No, certainly he was not that,' answered Annette. 'He knew who I was, though I did not know him. He had heard too that you were ill, and seemed well acquainted with all about you; but yet I could not get him to come on to the chateau, though the wolf had bit him in the heel severely, I should imagine from the blood I saw. He told me, however, that he had particular reasons for not making himself known.'

The count turned somewhat pale, and enquired, 'What age was he?'

'That I can hardly tell,' replied Annette, 'but—'

'Was he old or young?' demanded the count, interrupting her.

'Oh, young!' exclaimed Annette, 'young, certainly! Perhaps five or six and twenty, but not more.'

The count seemed relieved, and answered, 'It is a pity your gallant deliverer would not come in, my Annette; you might have told him that he could trust me in safety.'

'I did so,' answered Annette, 'but I could not prevail. He was very obdurate indeed, I can assure you.'

'He must be obdurate indeed, my dear child, with whom you could not prevail,' said the count, 'but go, my Annette, wash away the blood

from you neck, and then come back. You shall instantly write a note for me to the Baron de Nogent. He is the *louveter** of the canton; and, though it be not the proper season for hunting them, we must not suffer them to roam about in this way, at any time of the year.'

The note was accordingly written in the course of that evening, and was sent over to Castle Nogent by a man on horseback, who returned in about two hours. He brought no note in answer to that of the count, but merely a message. The Baron de Nogent, he said, was ill in bed; but he had told one of his servants to reply, that, having heard that one or two wolves had been seen in the neighborhood, he had already ordered the dogs and men, which he was obliged to maintain for that purpose, to clear the country of the savage beasts, and the hunters were even then in the woods putting these commands into execution.

'Ill is he?' demanded the count.

'Yes, my lord,' answered the servant; 'he has been very ill, his people said, for more than three weeks.'

'I grieve that I cannot go over to see him,' said Monsieur de Castelneau, turning to Annette; 'he is one of the few men whom I can respect and esteem. Could you not ride over to-morrow, my Annette, and visit him for me? He is so solitary at all times, that I cannot but think in sickness it would be a comfort to him to see you.'

'Oh, I will go willingly,' replied Annette.—'You know how I love and reverence him. I wish from my heart he would let us do any thing to make his solitary hours more cheerful than they are.'

Before the sun had risen into the meridian on the following morning, Annette mounted a jennet, which had been bought and trained for her own riding; and followed, as was then customary, by two or three servants, she took the road towards Fons, and in little more than an hour had reached Castle Nogent. After some delay, the baron admitted her to his sick chamber, and thanked her for her visit with kindness and sincerity. She found him very much worn; but he assured her that he was much better than he had been, and would soon be well. For more than an hour Annette sat by him striving to cheer and amuse him; and so successful did she find herself, that she promised to return in a day or two if her guardian continued to improve in health. The baron caught eagerly at her offer, and reminded her of it when she went away; and Annette, repeating that she would not forget, left him with a heart satisfied and gay at having done an act of kindness, and seeing that it was not only appreciated but successful to the fullest extent she could desire.

She was riding quickly through the woods, with the beauty of the scene, the fineness of the day, and the exhilarating motion of her horse all

* Many noblemen were formerly invested with this office of *louveter*, or titular hunter of the wolves in their district; nor is it yet altogether abolished, although the wolves in France have greatly decreased in numbers since that time.

adding to the glad sensations of her own heart, when suddenly, at one of the cross roads of the forest, she was met by a gentleman on horseback, who for an instant drew in his rein as if with surprise and hesitation; but the moment after rode up to her with a low inclination of the head, and turned his horse upon the same path which she was pursuing.

The reader has already divined what Annette discovered at first sight—that the stranger who now joined her was the person who had saved her from the wolf. He was differently dressed, however; and was now clothed in a rich hunting suit, which became him well. It was impossible not to own that in person and in features he was a very handsome man; but that was little in Annette's estimation, when compared with the high and noble expression of his countenance, which would certainly prove Nature to be a sad deceiver, she thought, if his heart were not generous and kind.

Mademoiselle de St. Morin received him with a glad and open smile, held out her hand frankly towards him, and said at once, 'Oh! I am so glad to see you again.'

The stranger pressed the hand which she gave in his own; and his sparkling eyes replied in language not to be mistaken, that, if she was glad to see him, he was no less so to see her.—There was, however, in the young lady's look a gay and playful expression,—a meaning, perhaps it might be called,—which surprised her companion; and while the grooms dropped farther behind, and she rode on with him side by side, she led the conversation cheerfully and brightly, as if she had known him for many years.

'I am happy,' he said at length, 'most happy to see you so well, and that your fright has not hurt your health or spirits.'

'You think my spirits high, perhaps,' answered Annette, 'because I am more gay and familiar with you than I was when last we met.—There is a reason for it, however. Do you know what that reason is?'

'No, indeed,' he replied, 'I cannot even divine it.—Nay more, I have learnt from many an old fiction and tale of my childhood, that when any thing which makes us very happy is dark and mysterious we should never pry into the secret, lest we dispel the charm.'

'But I will tell you the secret,' replied Annette; 'for the magic is all very simple, I can assure you. The secret then is, that I now know who you are; and believe me that discovery makes a very great difference; for although I must ever have been grateful, had you been who you might, there are some whom it is a pleasure to be grateful to—some a pain.'

'Are you sure you are right, dear lady?' said the stranger.

'I am sure,' she replied, 'quite sure, though no one has betrayed you.'

'How then is it possible you can know?' he demanded; 'for I am certain that you never saw me until two days ago.'

'Nay, I discovered it very easily,' she answered; 'by studying the face of a father after

I had seen that of a son. Not that the features are alike, but the expression. You will understand better what I mean, when I tell you that I have just been to Castle Nogent, and sat with the baron for more than an hour.'

'Then all I have to say, dear lady,' replied the other, 'is that I must now, not only beg you to be cautious, but most particularly request that you will confine the discovery you have made to your own breast alone. I think I may ask this of you, without asking anything wrong; and I believe you will grant it, when you know that I am now both absent from my regiment without leave, and contrary to the express commands of the officer next in rank above myself; I mean the Baron de Cajare. I received news that my father was on the point of death; and as my presence was not wanted with the regiment, I merely announced to Monsieur de Cajare that it was my intention to visit this part of the country, stating my motives at full. He was himself wasting his time in Paris at the distance of two days' journey from the corps, but he thought fit to send a messenger, prohibiting my coming into this part of France. I instantly lodged my appeal with his superior and mine; but had I waited for a reply, my father might have been dead before I came. I therefore had to choose my course, and at once decided on coming hither immediately. My companions are all my friends, and they give me good intelligence; but I must return to-morrow or the day after, lest this gentleman rejoin the regiment and find that I am absent.'

'Oh! for pity's sake rejoin it at once,' exclaimed Annette. 'I tremble to think what might be the consequences, if your absence were discovered. I cannot help supposing that Monsieur de Cajare is a somewhat heartless person, who would show but little compassion or consideration of any kind.'

'In this instance,' replied her companion, 'he has certainly shown very little consideration; and I know not why he has acquired for himself in the service the reputation of a very remorseless man. I must own myself, however,' he added frankly, 'that I have never personally seen him say or do any thing that should give rise to such an opinion. His demeanor, as far as I have seen it, has always been that of a finished gentleman and a man of refined taste.'

Mademoiselle de St. Morin looked down thoughtfully, but for some time made no reply. At length, however, she answered, 'I know too little of him to judge; but I should rather think that, in the ordinary course of life, people display what they will be on great occasions by small traits, and you may depend upon it that it is by these his fellow-officers have judged him.'

'It may be so,' replied her companion; 'and indeed the only story that I ever heard of his doing any thing to win himself such a reputation referred to his having won a large sum from a young man at play. The loser had indeed lost all, and more than all, for he was forced to tell Cajare that he had not wherewithal to pay him; upon which the baron coolly took his sword and broke it across his knee, saying, what

was perhaps true, but very cruel, that he who played for sums he could not pay was unworthy to wear the weapon of a man of honor. The unhappy man threw open the window which was just above the course of the Rhone, and cast himself headlong out. Cajare sat still at the table, and called for more cards. So goes the story in the regiment; but I was not with it at the time, being then a lieutenant in the regiment of Picardy.'

Annette gave a shudder as she listened, but made no reply, and her companion soon turned the conversation to other things. During the course of their ride she found the same highly finished taste, the same knowledge of men, of countries, and of arts, which had given a charm to the conversation of the Baron de Cajare; but there was something superadded now, something that, like the sunshine to a beautiful landscape, afforded the crowning grace to all the rest, brightened every thing it shone upon, and called forth the beauties of the whole. It was, that the heart spoke as well as the head; it was, that there was feeling, as well as thought, in every thing. Frankness and openness too, candor and bright sincerity, were in every word that he spoke; and, though it was evident that he considered far less what was likely to please without the effort, and won without the calculation. It was a very bright hour for Annette while she rode onward with him towards the chateau. At length, however, he drew in his rein, saying, with a deep sigh, 'And now that I must leave you, forgive me if I repeat in thus parting from you, certainly for a long time, and perhaps for ever, that I shall recollect you long and well—far too long ever to enjoy again the society with which I am going to mingle.—I shall see nothing like you there; and yet I cannot find in my heart to regret that I have thus met you, even though I be destined thus to leave you—I mean no compliment, no exaggeration, but simple truth.'

Annette blushed deeply; but yet she found courage to raise her eyes to his, saying in a tone gently reproachful, 'Oh! Monsieur Nogent, how can I answer you? All I will say then is, pray go back to your regiment, and believe me that I will see your father constantly, and show him every care and tendance in my power, as much out of gratitude to you as out of affectionate regard for him.'

She held out her hand to him once more; he pressed his lips upon it, and then turning his horse rode away.

Annette proceeded slowly to the chateau; but as she guided her horse through the gates, she looked back towards the hills and woodlands stretching in the direction of Fons. There was one spot where the shoulder of the nearest acclivity protruded bare through the wood, and commanded a view of the chateau and the ground round about it. On the summit of the hill, at the distance of about three quarters of a mile, Annette de St. Morin saw a single horseman. He was perfectly motionless, and was evidently gazing upon the path she had taken. Annette could not distinguish at the distance who

it was, but there was something within told her at once the name of him who was there watching for the last look.

CHAPTER XVI.

As Annette passed through the old hall, and was taking her way up stairs which led to the saloon, she paused from time to time, to reflect. Her thoughts were all in confusion; the usual calm tranquillity did not reign in her bosom; her heart beat; and her mind would not fix upon any certain point. She was alarmed at her own sensations, and asked herself the cause of them.

One of the causes—for in this instance, as in all others, there were many causes combining to produce one effect—she soon discovered; but it was not the chief cause. She had tacitly promised not to reveal the fact, which she had discovered accidentally, of the presence of the young Baron de Nogent in that part of the country; and she fancied that it was the necessity of concealing any thing from one to whom she had been hitherto all candor, that thus agitated and bewildered her. She felt, however, that she had no right to sport with the fate of another; and though she was sure that the secret, with the Count de Castelleau would be as safe as with herself, yet, as he whom that secret chiefly affected had besought her to tell no one, she resolved to obey the injunction to the letter.

There was no difficulty in so doing, for her guardian had retired to take some repose during the heat of the noon; which had lately become customary with him, and from which habit he had derived great benefit. When he returned to the saloon, he confined his questions solely to the state of the old nobleman whom Annette had visited, approved highly of her promise to see him again, and expressed a wish that she would go to Castel Nogent on the ensuing day.

Annette hesitated, however, and then replied that she would rather postpone her visit till the morning after. The count said let it be so; but he gave her an enquiring glance, asking himself why she, who was ever ready to fly to aid and comfort those who needed either assistance or consolation, should delay in the present instance the execution of her task of kindness.—Annette saw him look at her very gravely, and the color rose into her cheek, for the motive of her conduct was not easily to be explained even to herself.

The fact is, she wished Ernest de Nogent to be gone back to his regiment before she renewed her visit to his father, and she feared that such might not be the case if she went to Castel Nogent the next day. Was his society disagreeable to her, then? Oh no! but the agitation which she felt—ay, and his evident admiration—and, even more than all, the new strange pleasure which his conversation had afforded, frightened her young and inexperienced heart, and made her wish for thought, long and intense thought, ere she beheld him again. Timidity even flies from that which it loves; and it is no

proof at all that the society of the young Baron de Nogent was not more pleasing to Mademoiselle de St. Morin than any other which she had yet met with in life, that she was unwilling to return to Castel Nogent till she was perfectly sure that he had left it. She colored a little then, more from the inexplicability of her own feelings than from aught else; but the count took no notice except in his own heart, and Annette's journey was accordingly put off for a day.

In the meantime, what were the comments with her own spirit?—what were the questions that she asked her own heart?—what were the replies that her own heart made?

Alack, and a well-a-day, reader, that we should confess it! But Annette was a woman; and with all a woman's feelings she retired to her chamber that night, this king that she had the most anxious purpose of enquiring into her own sensations—of asking herself, in short, a thousand questions which nobody but herself could answer. Yet when she had entered her now chamber, and closed the door, and leaned her head upon her hand and began the enquiry, she stopped at the very threshold of the secret chamber, and would go on no farther. She persuaded herself that there was nothing to enquire into, that she had been frightened about nothing, that it was all extremely natural and very right for her to like the conversation and be pleased with the society of a graceful and accomplished young man who had saved her life; and though, perhaps, there were doubts at the very bottom of her heart of all this reasoning being correct, yet she suffered it to prevent her from enquiring farther, and let it convince her well, if it did not convince her judgment. Have we not often seen a child stand on a summer day at the margin of the sunny sea, longing to bathe its limbs in the refreshing wave! Have we not seen it cast off its garments and dip in the timid foot,—draw back, hurry on its clothing again, and run away, as if in fear of those bright but untrodden waters? Thus was it with Mademoiselle de St. Morin,—the ocean of love was before her, and she trembled to venture in.

Yet when, on the day appointed, she once more mounted her jennet to ride over to Castel Nogent, a soft sort of melancholy hung upon her—perhaps a feeling of regret to think that Ernest de Nogent was not there—that she should not see him again, to use his own words, 'certainly for a long time, perhaps forever.'—She rode more slowly and thoughtfully than she had formerly done—she gazed round at the spot where she had parted from him—she stopped her horse at the little fountain and let him drink in the stream, and then, with a sigh, she shook the rein and went on upon her way.

When she arrived at Castel Nogent, she paused at the usual entrance, which, let it be remarked, was a side door, and not the great gates; and on ringing the bell, was immediately admitted by an old and faithful servant of the family.

'Oh, madam!' he said, 'the Baron is very much better; I think your visit did him a great

deal of good. If you will come into the library for a moment, he will be down stairs.'

Annette followed to the library, which she found untenanted, except by the sunshine, that poured in at the window through the branches of a thin tree opposite, and, dancing upon the floor as the wind waved the boughs, gave an air of cheerful life to the apartment. It was a fine old room, well stored with curious volumes, and with old lances and other weapons of a remote period, forming trophies between the book-cases; while here and there a casque, or corselet, or suit of complete armor belonging to some of the ancestors of the baron long dead, was seen on any vacant space upon the walls. The armor, it is true was somewhat rusty, the books covered with the dust of time; manifold notes danced in the beams of light; and everything showed that the servants in Castel Nogent were too few in number to keep the house in that exact order which leaves the hand of Time nearly powerless.

There was an air of dryness, however, and cheerful antiquity about the library, which was pleasant to the eye; and, as it was a place well suited to contemplation, Annette's first act was to fall into a reverie, still standing in the middle of the floor, with one hand resting on the tall back of the chair which the old servant had placed for her, the other holding her riding whip dropping gracefully by her side and her whole form and face presenting such an exquisite picture of Beauty in meditation, that one might have well wished to be a painter in order to draw her portrait as she there stood.

Her fancy must have been sweet—though they might have a tinge of melancholy in them—for the brow was as open as a bright summer's morning. But the mind must have been very intently occupied with some subject, for she remained during several minutes exactly in one position, without the slightest movement of any kind whatsoever.

On the left hand side, close by the tall window, and some eight or ten feet from the spot where she had placed herself, was a small door leading into various apartments of the old chateau; and at length, if her eyes had not been fixed so steadily upon the floor, she might have seen that door move slowly on its hinges. She did not see it, however, and the first thing that roused her was a shadow coming across the sunshine which found its way through the window.

Annette started and raised her eyes, a little confused, perhaps, at being found in so deep a fit of meditation; but all the blood rushed up into her face in a moment when she beheld Ernest de Nogent himself standing before her.

'Ab, Monsieur de Nogent!' she said, 'what has kept you here? Indeed I am very much afraid it may be dangerous to yourself.'

Ernest advanced and took her hand with a smile half gay, half melancholy.

'Perhaps it may be dangerous,' he said, shaking his head. 'It may be dangerous to me in more respects than you mean; but you must not ask me what has kept me here.'

'Nay,' she answered, gaily, trying to laugh away the agitation which she certainly did feel, but withdrawing her hand from his, 'you are very mysterious; and I will not attempt to discover mysteries with which I have nothing to do.'

'With this mystery, I am afraid,' he replied in a low and thoughtful voice, '—with this mystery, I am afraid, you have not a little to do.'

Annette turned pale. 'Indeed!' she said, with her heart beating violently. 'I should be very sorry to suppose that were the case, for I do think it very imprudent for you to stay.'

'Not so imprudent as you imagine—at least, in the sense that you mean,' replied Ernest; 'but in another sense, even more imprudent than you can believe.'

Annette was very much agitated, for his manner spoke more, perhaps, than his words; but do not let it be thought that she was hypocritical, if she tried to avoid a subject which produced so much emotion, and endeavored to turn the conversation back to the danger which her companion ran in remaining there.

'But you told me,' she said, '—you, yourself acknowledged to me there was a very, very great risk in your coming hither at all, and still more in your staying, when every hour may produce a discovery of your absence.'

'I have received letters from Paris since we last met,' he said; 'but the truth is, Mademoiselle de St. Morin, I am, I fear, very foolish, and I have to make two acknowledgements, each of which may perhaps give you offence. I could not make up my mind to go without seeing you again. That is my first acknowledgment; the next is, that I am sometimes tempted to wish with my whole heart that I had never beheld you at all.'

He had taken Annette's hand while he spoke, and he could not be insensible how it trembled in his own. The varying color in her cheek, the downcast of her bright eye, the quick and agitated breathing, might all encourage him to proceed; but, though such signs were not without their happy auguries, Ernest was both unwilling to agitate her too much, and too doubtful of success to press his suit vehemently. Before he had well concluded his sentence, Annette had sunk slowly down into the chair beside her, and placed her left hand over her eyes.

'I agitate you,' he continued, suffering her hand to be gently withdrawn from his. 'Nay, nay, do not be so much moved. Listen to me, Mademoiselle de St. Morin, listen to me calmly. It is I who have cause to be agitated and apprehensive—but hark!' he continued, pausing abruptly. 'Hark! there is the sound of wheels. What may this mean? It never happens but thus; and when we have but one precious moment on which depend our fate and happiness forever, we are prevented from using it by some impertinent trifle.'

Annette looked up; pushed back the curls from her face, over which they had fallen in the agitation of the moment; wiped away something like a tear from her eyes, and then held out her hand again to Ernest de Nogent with a smile, which at that moment he would not have exchanged for an empire.

It might be a long task, reader, to explain all the little peculiarities in thought and feeling which made her act so differently from any other woman; and even when it was done you might perhaps understand the whole clearly, if you have not comprehended the whole clearly already from the account that has been laid before you of her education and her natural disposition. She could hardly recover herself, however, and remove the traces of agitation from her countenance, ere the door of the library opened, and the old servant entered with a face somewhat pale, announcing—the Baron de Cajare!

Ernest de Nogent drew himself up to his full height; and his left hand, by an impulse that he could not resist, fell upon the scabbard of his sword, as if to bring the hilt round towards the right. Annette had just time to give him one imploring look, saying with a low voice, 'For Heaven's sake, for your father's sake, for my sake, recollect yourself!' when the Baron de Cajare entered the room, and advanced with his usual calm and graceful demeanor towards the spot where Mademoiselle de St. Morin was seated. His lip was curled with the slightest possible sarcastic smile; but there was no frown upon his brow, and he bowed with the utmost politeness to Annette, saying this is an unexpected pleasure, Mademoiselle; I trust that you have continued in health and happiness, notwithstanding your close attendance upon Monsieur de Castelnau.

Annette bowed her head; and, hoping from his manner that the errand of the Baron de Cajare was not such as she and Ernest himself believed it to be, she replied in polite terms, and at greater length than she otherwise would have done, stating that she herself was well, and that the Count de Castelnau was daily improving in health.

The baron listened to every word with the most courteous attention, and, ere she had concluded, the old Baron de Nogent himself was in the room. That gentleman instantly fixed his eyes with a frown upon the Baron de Cajare, though he grasped Annette's hand, as if to show her that he did not overlook her and thanked her for her coming.

'To what cause, Monsieur de Cajare,' he said, 'am I to attribute the honor of this unexpected and unusual visit?'

'I hope you are better, my dear sir,' replied the baron; 'but I must not take to myself more credit than is my due. My visit is not to yourself, as my very slight acquaintance with you, Monsieur de Nogent, would not justify such intrusion; but it is to this good gentleman your son, a captain in my regiment of horse, with whom I wish to speak a word or two upon busi-

ness which we will not discuss in the presence of a lady.'

'Mademoiselle de St. Morin will excuse me, sir,' said the baron, 'if I beg to know at once what is your purpose towards my son.'

'I must beg an answer to a similar question too,' added Ernest; 'as I take it for granted, after our late correspondence, that you did not come here without an object of some importance, and I must choose my own measures accordingly.'

'You will of course take no measures but those that are right and proper,' replied the baron; 'but as you say that Mademoiselle de St. Morin will excuse us all, and as I am in some haste, I will merely beg leave to state that I am under the disagreeable necessity of arresting my young friend here for disobedience of orders, and of sending him to trial for that offence.'

'In short, sir,' replied the old baron, 'you sought to keep him from his father's sick bed, and now you would seek to break that father's heart?'

'A somewhat hard construction of a simple act of duty,' replied Monsieur de Cajare; 'nevertheless, my dear sir, it must be accomplished; and he moved towards the window.'

'Is it possible that your nature can be so hard and unfeeling?' said Annette. 'Pray, pray, Monsieur de Cajare, have some consideration for the circumstances of the case.'

'Alas, my dear young lady,' replied the baron, 'war is a school that makes us very hard-hearted, I am afraid; but, notwithstanding, I must call up the guard. Do not be frightened at their mustaches, dear lady,' he added, with a sarcastic smile; 'the Parisian ladies tell me they are very harmless people.'

While speaking he had approached the window, and now putting out his head, he called 'Come up! come up!'

Something that he saw below seemed to excite his surprise, however; for he still continued to look out, exclaiming, 'Diantre! what is the meaning of this? Come up, I say!'

In the meanwhile, the baron and his son and Annette de Morin gazed for a moment or two with the silence of deep grief in each other's faces; but no time was allowed them to speak, for even while Monsieur de Cajare was calling from the window, and ordering the guard a second time with no very measured language to come up, a gentleman dressed in black, and holding a paper in his hand, entered the room with a quiet and noiseless step, and advanced gravely and quickly, without saluting any body.

The baron and his son stared at this new intruder with evident surprise; but Annette instantly recognised the gentleman whom she had seen with two ladies near the fountain in the wood, and, why she knew not, but his presence seemed a relief to her. He took not the slightest notice of her on the present occasion, however; and, passing the party in the middle of the room, proceeded to the window from which the Baron de Cajare was reiterating his order to come up, adding, in a fierce tone and with a

somewhat ungentlemanlike interjection, 'Why do you not obey?'

So quiet was the step of the stranger who had so suddenly entered the room, that the baron was perfectly unconscious of his presence till he felt a heavy hand upon his shoulder, and heard the words, which were then somewhat fearful in France, '*De par le Roi!*'

Monsieur de Cajare instantly turned round, and when he beheld the person who stood beside him, turned deadly pale.

'Monsieur le Baron de Cajare,' said the stranger, 'in virtue of this *lettre de cachet*, I arrest you in the name of the king, and enjoin you to go with me.'

'Where do you intend to take me, Monsieur Morin?' said the baron at once, without the slightest sign of resistance.

'I intend to send you to the Bastille, sir,' replied Pierre Morin. 'I have some other business yet to do in this part of the world, so that I cannot have the honor of accompanying you to Paris. Every thing is prepared for your comfortable journey; your own carriage is below, or I am much mistaken; but you made a little mistake just now, and took my archers for your own soldiers. May I ask you to walk down, sir, with all convenient speed?'

The Baron de Cajare looked at Annette and then at Ernest de Nogent, and for an instant an expression like that of a fiend came over his countenance. It was gone almost as soon as it appeared, the angry voice in which he called from the window was laid aside likewise, and not the slightest change of tone from that which he used in ordinary conversation was to be distinguished, as he answered Pierre Morin, 'Well Monsieur Morin, of course I obey the king's commands; but I beg leave to say, my young friend here, Monsieur de Nogent, is under my arrest. I must give him into the care of my guard before—'

'You must do nothing before obeying the king's commands, sir,' replied Pierre Morin: 'besides, you need put yourself into no trouble regarding your soldiers, for I took the liberty of discharging them from attendance upon you. You must recollect, Monsieur le Baron, prisoners have no authority. As to Monsieur de Nogent, sir, I have also the king's orders—'

'To arrest him?' exclaimed the Baron de Cajare.

'I shall notify his majesty's commands affecting him to himself, sir,' replied Pierre Morin in a stern voice, 'and not to you. Allow me to say we are wasting time. You have caused me to hurry down here, sir, from the capital, when, if you had attended to the hint sent to you by the Duke de Choiseuil, you would have saved me much trouble, and might perhaps have saved yourself from the Bastille; but vengeance, sir, has no forethought, and his majesty has been made to understand the motives upon which you acted.'

'He might at least have sent a gentleman to arrest me,' said the Baron de Cajare, with a curling lip.

Pierre Morin seemed not in the slightest degree offended, merely replying, 'Sir, I obey his majesty's commands, and he expects you to do the same, he they notified to you by whom they may. But, at the same time, if it be any gratification to you to know that you are treated in the same manner as other persons, let me call to your mind that Pierre Morin, chief officer of the king's lieutenant-general of police, has arrested gentlemen whose ancestors were noble five centuries before your great-grandfather quitted the little bureau in the Rue Quinquampoix.'

The color came warm into the cheek of the Baron de Cajare, as Pierre Morin in the quietest possible tone rebuked his insolent pride. The chief agent of the police of Paris, however, was not to be trifled with any more; and lifting up his finger as he saw Cajare about to reply, he said in a tone of command, 'Monsieur le Baron de Cajare, obey the king's commands! Descend the staircase, take your place in the carriage which is waiting for you, and surrender yourself at the royal prison of the Bastille without another word, or I will report your contumacy to his majesty!'

The baron's haughty air instantly sunk; and, without taking notice of any one, without bow or word of adieu, he crossed the room and descended to the hall. Pierre Morin followed; but before he did so, he turned towards Ernest de Nogent, saying, 'Monsieur de Nogent, you will be good enough to remain here till I come back; and then, proceeding with his quick noiseless step down the stairs, he saw the Baron de Cajare into his carriage, and two guards take their seats in the vehicle beside him.

While all these events had been taking place, a number of people had gathered together in the court of the chateau, some from the neighboring hamlet, some from the woods where they had been destroying the wolves; and manifold were the enquiries of 'What is the matter, what is the matter?'

At length the enquiry was pronounced close to Pierre Morin, who stood on the steps before the great gateway, where the carriage had been drawn up. As soon as he heard it, he turned round to those who spoke, and pronounced the magical words, '*Enlèvement de police*,' an arrest by the police; and at the sound the very boldest drew three or four steps back, with countenances far paler than they had been before.

Ay, the very men who not many years afterwards marched to Paris, and aided to dye the streets of the capital with the blood of many of the best, the bravest, and the noblest in the land, now drew back in terror at the very name of that redoubtable police, whose whole real power, like almost every power on earth, was derived from the fears of those upon whom it was exercised. The carriage rolled rapidly away, after Pierre Morin had handed the paper which he held to one of the soldiers in the inside, and he himself turned his steps again into the mansion of Monsieur de Nogent.

In the meanwhile, those whom he had left behind in the library of the chateau had continued gazing upon each other with some degree of

painful expectation; but Annette recollected the kind, nay the affectionate manner, in which the very man who seemed to possess such power had spoken to her in the forest, and the moment Pierre Morin again appeared, she advanced towards him, saying, 'Let me speak with Monsieur Morin for a moment.'

'Oh, sir! she said, in a low voice, as soon as she was near enough to speak without her words being overheard, 'when last I saw you, you expressed yourself kindly and tenderly towards me; let me beseech you to spare Monsieur de Nogent as far as it be possible. Pray remember, sir, he only came hither to see his father, who was then supposed to be dying; and, though that father is better, yet have some consideration for him too.'

Pierre Morin heard her in silence, looking in her face with a smile of kindly meaning.

'My dear young lady,' he said, at length, 'you mistake the whole business; I have no power in this matter—I am a mere instrument. But do not be frightened; I have nothing to say to Monsieur Nogent which should pain him, or alarm you.'

'Sir,' he continued, turning to Ernest, 'this young lady has been pleading for you, as if I had some authority of my own in this business; but you very well know I am a mere agent, as I just told her. I must therefore inform you, that his majesty commands you to return to your regiment immediately. He has directed me to say, that, as far as he is concerned, he pardons you, in consideration of your father's state of health. The general under whose command you serve will reprimand you for being absent without leave, should he think it necessary. The cause of such an humble individual as myself being commanded to convey this message to you, rather than a military officer, is simply that I was ordered down hither in haste to arrest the Baron de Cajre, whose offence against his majesty has been in some degree mixed up with the question of your absence without leave. You will understand, sir, that the king's order is peremptory that you depart for your regiment instantly. I will now take my leave.'

It was in vain the Baron de Nogent and his son pressed Pierre Morin to take some refreshment before he went; he retired at once, taking leave of Annette as he passed, and whispering a single brief sentence in her ear.

The words which Pierre Morin addressed to Annette were merely these, 'Do not be surprised or alarmed at any thing you may hear when you return home.' But, as always happens, imagination instantly attached the idea of coming evil to the injunction not to fear, and Annette's fancy suggested that some accident or misfortune must have befallen the Count de Castelnau during her absence. She now learned to feel that there were other persons in the world who might be loved as well as herself, but that did not make her love him differently or less than before; and she hastened to quit her two companions, notwithstanding all the interest which she had learned to take in them, in order

to return to him towards whom all the affections of her heart had been given from infancy with high, pure, filial love.

The baron and Ernest de Nogent would fain have detained her, at least for a short time; but she would not stay, saying with a smile that as she had seen all their enemies frustrated, and even sickness put to flight, her errand was over, and she must hasten back.

Ernest led her down to her horse; and though there was many a thing in his heart that he would fain have found a moment to utter, yet, perhaps from the impossibility of saying all in so short a space as that which was now afforded him, he remained silent till they reached the bottom of the staircase. There, however, he paused and detained her for an instant, asking with a look of entreaty, 'May I not accompany you on your ride?'

'No, no, indeed!' replied Annette. 'Pray remember the commands you have received, and return to your regiment without the delay even of an hour.'

'I will, he answered, 'I will; but will you not say one word to comfort and console me, in thus parting from all I hold dear, for a time the limits of which I know not?'

'What can I say?' rejoined Annette. 'What can I say?—All I can do is,' she added—and, as the spot where they stood was shadowed by a large buttress which crossed the window, the blush with which her words were accompanied could hardly be seen—'All I can do is, to beg you to be careful and prudent for the sake of those here—of all who love and esteem you.—You have run so great a risk already, that I cannot but tremble to think of what might be the consequence of any other act of rashness—and now, go! pray go quickly.—Fare you well!'

Thus saying, she turned towards the door; but Ernest detained her for one moment longer, to press his lips again and again upon her hand. Again he felt that it trembled in his own; and her agitation, coupled with the words that he spoke, gave an assurance to his heart which was not a little consoling to him.

VOLUME II—CHAPTER I.

With her eyes bent down towards her saddle-bow, and her cheek still somewhat glowing, Annette departed, proceeding at a quick pace up the hill upon the slope of which the chateau of Castel Nogent was built. When she had passed the archway, however, she tightened the rein and suffered the horse to go on at a walk, thinking deeply over all that had occurred. Again and again she asked her heart, 'What are these sensations that I feel towards Ernest de Nogent? Is this love?'

She could no longer conceal from herself that he was not to her the same as other men; but she would not believe—or perhaps I should say she would not admit, that it could be love which she felt. The time was so short,—their meetings so few, that she could not—she would not, allow that it could be love. But yet Annette was not only now convinced that she did feel different sensations towards the young Lord of

Castel Nogent from those which she had ever experienced before towards any human being; but, upon reflection, she found that her whole conduct had been such as to give him hope and encouragement; and she blushed as if a thousand eyes had been upon her at the presence of that conviction in her heart.

We have shown that Annette de St. Morin had been tempted, a night or two before, to shut her eyes to the consideration of her own feelings, and to shrink from the examination of the new passion which was insidiously taking possession of her heart; but, though she might do this, Annette had been taught from her earliest days, never so to shrink from the examination of her own conduct, never so to shut her eyes to the result of any action that she had actually done; and she now carefully and thoughtfully enquired to what she had pledged and pledged herself by her demeanor towards Ernest de Nogent. It might, indeed, be a question, whether she examined fairly; because inclination, in all our dealings with our own heart, is at the ear of the judge; and perhaps Annette did give a little more weight to every word she had spoken, to every look and gesture favorable to Ernest, than she would have done, had he been less agreeable to her. The general result, however, was right; it was, that she had given him a degree of encouragement which she never could retract with honor, and, as a consequence of that very encouragement, she felt herself bound to tell all that had passed, even including the thoughts and feelings of her own mind and heart, to the person who had been to her, as she herself said, more than a father.

The anticipation of doing so, however, agitated and troubled her far more than she could have believed any thing of the kind would do.—How to begin the tale she knew not; how to go on with it was equally perplexing; now to express what were her feelings, what were her thoughts, made the color rise in her cheek, and her eyes sink to the ground even while she asked herself the question.

Her horse went now merely at a walk, but she urged him not on either by voice or whip; and, so far from hastening homeward, she took a somewhat longer path through the woods, not remarking that clouds had gathered in the sky while she had remained at Castel Nogent, and that the sultry heat of the air portended the coming storm. So it was, however. Over the tops of the tall trees might be seen gathering dull leaden masses of dense vapor, and the breath of the air had not the balminess of the preceding days, but was both sultry and oppressive in the highest degree. It could not be called fiery, like the gale that blows over the sands of Egypt; but it felt moist, though hot and difficult to breathe, as if it were borne from the depths of ferns and morasses, exhaling deadly vapors under the rays of an ardent sun. Still, between the hard edges of the heavy clouds, the blue sky appeared, especially toward the zenith, where the great orb of day continued pouring on his flood of sovereign splendor, as if at once careless and unconscious of all the storms and tempests

which may vex the earth below. The hum of the insect world, which had been busy in the morning, was now still; the voice of the birds, which had resounded through the woods and the valleys, was now reduced to a few short notes, begun perhaps in gladness of heart, but terminated apparently in apprehension of some coming evil.

To all these warnings, however, Annette was blind, so busy was she in the world of her own heart; and the only external thing that caught her attention was the fretfulness of her horse. Attributing it to thirst from heat and exercise, she guided the animal to the bank of the stream, and casting down the rein upon his neck, she let him drink, gazing with apparent interest upon the reflection of her beautiful jennet's head in the water, but, in truth, seeing nothing but the images within her own breast. She was thus sitting calmly, with her hands resting on her knee, her head bent down, and her eyes fixed upon the clear smooth stream, when suddenly a flash of intense brightness blazed over the glistening expanse of water, followed instantly by a loud clap of thunder which made the woods echo around. The horse threw its head suddenly back from the river, reared, plunged, and darted forward; and before Annette could make any effort to save herself, she was cast headlong into the stream.

The water was not very deep, and the servants flew in an instant to the assistance of one whom the whole household loved; but still, when they drew her forth from the stream, she was to all appearance lifeless. With the tears and loud lamentations in which the excitable people of the south of France indulge on all occasions of grief, the servants bore the form of Annette on towards the chateau; but, when they arrived there, they found nothing but faces of bustle and anxiety. Horses and postillions were standing in the courtyard; good old Donnine was giving manifold orders regarding various packages of ladies' gear which other servants were bringing down; and the great family coach, as well as the old *chaise de poste*, were drawn out into the principal courtyard. All betokened preparations for an immediate journey; but all this bustle was turned instantly into silent consternation as poor Anne te was carried into the chateau. They bore her forward into a large saloon on the ground floor; but as they stretched her on one of the long hard sofas of the day, some signs of returning animation began to show themselves. Her beautiful hands closed with a convulsive motion as if she felt pain, and it became clear that life was not extinct.

The sounds of lamentation and dismay which had followed Mademoiselle de St. Morin into the house soon reached the ears of the Count de Castelneau; and, after a vain enquiry, he came down himself, followed by his two medical attendants, who happened at the moment to be with him.

To behold her he loved best on earth lying there, pale as a withered flower, her beautiful dark hair fallen about her face and neck, her

eyes closed, ¹er lips bloodless, might well affect any man deeply, and doubtless it greatly moved the Count de Castelneau; but it was not such sights, or such events, that produced those attacks of illness under which he had lately suffered. His lip quivered a little, the gaze of his eye grew more intense and anxious, and the muscles of the brow contracted in a certain degree; but he had every command over himself, and asked in a clear calm voice, 'How did this happen?'

The tale was soon told; but even as it was telling the surgeon, who was luckily present, exclaimed, 'She is not dead;' and, drawing forth his lancet, he proceeded to employ such means as he thought necessary to recall poor Annette to consciousness. At first the blood flowed with difficulty, but soon it came in a fuller stream, and in a few moments she opened her eyes faintly, and then closed them again, murmuring an indistinct word or two with her lips. It were tedious to tell all that was done to restore her to recollection; but let it suffice that, in the space of about three quarters of an hour, Mademoiselle de St. Morin, who was suffering, not from the temporary suspension of animation produced by immersion in the water, but from the stunning effects of her fall, completely recovered her speech and consciousness; and, holding out her hand to Monsieur de Castelneau, she said, 'Do not fear!—Do not fear, my dear father! I am not much hurt—I am better now.'

A glistening drop came into the count's eyes; but he replied tranquilly, 'Thank God! my Annette, you are not much hurt. These gentlemen assure me that such is the case; but be composed for a little while, and do not speak yourself, for I have some news to give you. I will leave you for a few minutes, and return to tell you more.'

The count was gone about half an hour, and, when he did come back, he found Annette apparently much recovered, though she was in truth severely bruised, and in considerable pain.

'What are the tidings, my dear father?' she asked, as he sat down again beside her. 'They are no evil tidings, I hope?'

'No! oh, no!' replied the count; 'do not alarm yourself, my Annette; but I fear I cannot remain to witness your recovery, dear child. The king has sent me an order to come to Paris without an instant's delay. The cause assigned for this command is much suspicion of disaffection, in consequence of my long absence from the capital. It is this be the real cause, such suspicion may be cleared away in an hour.'

As he spoke the count felt into deep thought, and remained with his eyes fixed upon the ground for several moments; while Annette gazed up in his face with an eager and enquiring look, as if seeking to scan her guardian's feelings, and gather more information than his words afforded. No one, perhaps, was so well qualified to learn from the countenance of Monsieur de Castelneau what was passing in his heart as Annette de St. Morin; but even to her his face was a very unreadable book on most occasions. In

the present instance, however, she was right in some degree; and she said, 'You doubt whether that suspicion be the real cause or not? but you must not go without me. I can go very well—I am recovered now—I can go quite well.'

The count bent down his head and kissed her brow, saying, 'I am afraid, my dear Annette, that I am very selfish with regard to you, and that my love for your society has but too often prevented me from giving you the advantage of mingling in the world as much as you ought to do; but yet, my dear child, I am not so basely selfish as to rob you of health, perhaps of life, for any comfort or consolation whatsoever. It is quite impossible that you should go with me in your present state; equally impossible, I grieve to say, that I should stay till you are better. These gentlemen of art, however, inform me that, if you remain tranquil here, I need be under no apprehension for your health. One of them I must take with me, as it might be dangerous for me to travel without assistance.—Monsieur Merle, however, will see you every day; and you must let me know by letter what is the exact state of my dear child's health. I, in return, will write to you as soon as I reach Paris, and you shall speedily hear both how I am, and what is the real cause of this sudden call. It is strange that, after eighteen years' absence, I should have any enemy so pertinacious as to inspire suspicions of my conduct in the mind of the king!'

'You do not think,' said Annette, in a low voice, and with a glance towards the other persons who were in the room, which made the count bend down his ear to listen,—'you do not think the Baron de Cajare can have any thing to do with this?'

The count started, exclaiming, 'What makes you think so?'

The color came slightly into Annette's cheek, as she replied, 'I have scarcely any reason; but I recollect he one day said, when he was speaking in a way which surprised and pained me, that means might be easily found of forcing you out of this old chateau to what he called the intellectual pleasures of the capital.'

The slight cloud which hung upon the count's brow cleared away in a moment. 'Ha! Monsieur de Cajare!' he said, 'is it so?' You are doubtless right, my Annette. I have known men sent to the Bastille at the instigation of intriguing scoundrels, for a much less object than that which Monsieur de Cajare has in view.—He shall find himself mistaken, however.'

'He has done so already,' replied Annette, 'for he was down at Castel Nogent this morning, and seemed to think he had every thing and every body in his power; but, in the midst of it all, an agent of police came in, arrested him, and sent him to the Bastille.'

'Indeed!' said the count, 'indeed! But what more, my Annette; you seem to have more to say?'

'I must forbid it to be said now; I am afraid,' said the physician, advancing to Annette's side; 'it is neither fit for you, count, nor for Mademoiselle de St. Morin. Remember, my dear

air, you have still some business of rather an agitating nature to go through.'

'Agitating!' said the count; 'you do not suppose that talking of, or making arrangements for, the only one event that is certain in human life, I mean death, can have any thing agitating in it to me? My dear Annette,' he went on, 'about to take a long journey, and having scarcely recovered from a severe fit of illness, I have thought it right once more to make my will in form. I have also laid out a large portion of your fortune in the purchase of the small lordship of St. Aubin on the Lot. You will take my word for it, my dear child, that it was an advantageous purchase; the deeds, properly made out in your name, are in the hands of my notary up stairs, but you must sign a paper signifying your consent to my thus employing your money on your behalf. As this good man,' he added, pointing to Monsieur Merle, 'shakes his head at this conversation, I will again leave you for a while, and then come back to you for a moment before I depart.'

Monsieur de Castelneau was absent for a greater length of time than before, and he then returned with his own notary and another member of the law. They carried with them various deeds and papers, which they presented to Annette and explained to her as the titles to the estate of St. Aubin, which her guardian was said to have purchased with money belonging to her.

The sum did indeed so far belong to her—although it proceeded from a moiety of his own revenues, which he had laid by ever since he had succeeded to the title of the Count de Castelneau—that he had always called it to himself Annette's portion; and he had thus suffered it to accumulate, in remembrance of the promise he had made, to give her a dowry according to the rank in which he brought her up. The laws of France, however, have always intermeddled with the disposal of private property, in a manner ever vexatious and often most inconvenient; and, in order to avoid all the difficulties which might thus have occurred, the Count of Castelneau have been obliged to have recourse to this method of purchasing property for Annette, which she could not be deprived of, let what might become of any other sum which he left to her by his will.

The formal part of the business was soon over; the notaries took the deeds away with them, but gave her an acknowledgment that they held them for her use; and in a minute after one of the servants came to inform the count that mademoiselle's clothes had been removed from the carriage, and that all was ready for his own departure.

'I must now bid you farewell, my Annette,' replied the count; 'but since I have heard what you had to tell me regarding Monsieur de Cajare, I go with a mind at ease. Previously to your return, my poor girl, I had fondly hoped that you would be the companion of my journey, and good Donnine had bustled herself for your departure. That would have been exactly what Monsieur de Cajare desired, no doubt;

but this accident disappoints him as well as me, and I now leave you mistress of Castelneau till my return. I have but one injunction to give you, my Annette, which is, to be careful of yourself. You will be kind to all others, I know; but I shall be very, very anxious regarding you, for these two sad dangers that have befallen you have shaken my confidence in your safety. Be careful, therefore, my Annette, and let me hear from you as soon as it is possible.'

Thus saying he left her, and a few unwonted tears rose in the fair girl's eyes; for, though her nature was not an apprehensive one, and experience had not yet taught her the instability of every earthly thing, yet she could not part from the friend and guardian of her infancy and youth, without a feeling of loneliness, ay, and of fear, not lest any evil should fall upon herself, but lest the fatigues of the way, or the intrigues of evil men at court, might impair his health and affect his happiness or life.

CHAPTER II

Though it may soon be our duty to follow the course of some of our other characters, to enquire into the proceedings of Monsieur de Cajare, to accompany Ernest de Nègent on his journey, or to trace the adventures of Monsieur de Castelneau, we must for the present dwell with Annette in the old chateau, and speak of some events which took place within a very short time after the departure of the count himself. As we have said, poor Annette felt sad and lonely; and, though good Donnine did her best to soothe and to console her, and though the well-regulated mind of the young lady herself taught her that to give way to apprehension was neither wise nor right, and that it was a duty to amuse her mind by every means in her power, yet the next two or three hours were very heavy to her, and she experienced, though but in a slight degree, that desolation of heart which every one must have felt still more deeply who has lost a dear and valued friend for ever. As the evening came on, also, the effects of her fall were more sensibly felt; she became somewhat feverish towards night, and the physician, who returned to see her, gave her some drugs to allay the pain and tranquillize her nerves, and directed her immediately to retire to rest.

Although it was not yet dark, she did as he directed, and left the saloon vacant. The evening sun streamed into it cheerfully, and traced a natural dial on the floor, marking the hours till the ray faded. The light grew more and more dim in the chamber; the black oak carving of the ceilings were lost in the obscurity; and the moon began to show herself in the heavens, triumphing, yet but timidly, in the absence of her great and glorious rival of the day.

It was at that hour and moment that the door of the saloon opened quietly, and a lady entered, leaning on the arm of a gentleman in dark clothing. No servant preceded them, no attendant followed; and the lady, sinking into one of the large arm-chairs, covered her eyes

with her hands, murmuring, 'Am I here once more?'

For several minutes she remained evidently weeping, but in silence and without violence: they seemed the tears of memory, and flowed by in the same solemn silence with which all the objects of the past march in review before the eye of conscience. The gentleman did not seat himself, but stood by her side uncovered; and, after a few minutes, he walked forward to the window, and gazed out towards the west, where a faint greenish film of light, the last effort of day, still hung like a curtain before the stars.

'I fear, madam,' said he, at length, returning to the lady's side,—'I fear, madam, that, if we do not proceed quickly, we shall lose the little light that remains, and be obliged to call some of the men to bring a lamp, which may be unpleasant.'

'I am ready, my good friend; I am ready,' she replied: 'but you may well imagine what are the feelings with which I behold all these well-remembered scenes, where the bubble of happiness first rose upon the stream of my life, and then burst and passed away for ever. But come! I could guide you in the dark; for, if the burning of the heart could communicate its intense fires to the earthly frame, every one of my footsteps, when last I trod the way from that chamber to this, must have been printed indelibly on the floor. Come, come, we shall soon find the place where my heart was broken.'

Thus saying, she led the way across the room to a smaller door than that by which she had entered, and on the opposite side. Taking her way through it, she proceeded by a corridor to the end of that wing of the chateau, and then passed the door of Annette's bed-chamber to the extreme west, where one of the large towers contained within itself two or three of the best rooms in the castle. The door which there ended the corridor was locked; but the gentleman who was with her had a number of keys in his hand, and, with extraordinary ease and precision, he selected the one which the keyhole required, applied it, and gave her entrance.

Those were days in which window-shutters to the higher rooms of a country house were almost unknown, and consequently in the apartments they now entered, which looked full towards the spot where the sun had set not half an hour before, the light was much more strong than at the opposite side of the building. Even here it was very faint, but there was still enough to guide the lady across the ante-chamber to the door of the room beyond. She laid her hand upon the lock, but paused for a moment as if under the influence of some strong emotion; and then, conquering her irresolution, she threw open the door, disclosing a bed-room fitted up with great taste and luxury: a toilet table festooned with velvet and gold; a bed with hangings of the same rich materials; tall mirrors in beautiful frames; and in the centre panel of the wainscot, on the opposite side of the room, a full-length portrait of a gentleman

in a military dress, apparently about to mount his horse. One foot was in the stirrup, one hand was upon the mane; and while the countenance was turned so as to look full into the room, the other hand, by the painter's skill appeared to stretch forth from the canvass, and wave a hat and plume as if bidding adieu to the spectators.

There was an air of joy, and youth, and bright hilarity in the whole figure and countenance, which not even the dim twilight of that hour could altogether conceal, and upon it fixed the lady's eyes the moment she opened the door. She pressed her hand upon her heart; looked around the room with an expression almost of fear; and then advancing with a quick step, she gazed earnestly upon the portrait, till, sinking on her knees before it, she murmured a short prayer. She remained there scarcely for a minute; but ere she rose many a tear bedewed the spot where she knelt, and it was with difficulty she could restrain them from flowing for some time afterwards.

Advancing into a small dressing-room beyond and approaching the huge mantelpiece of black oak, she said, laying her hand upon a large carved moulding. 'It is here;' and she ran her hand along it more than once, seeming to press upon the various flowers and figures with which it was ornamented. As she did so, she began to tremble, saying, 'Some one must have opened it since, or else they must have discovered and closed it altogether. It used to open with a touch.'

'Let me try,' said the gentleman, who was with her; 'it may well have got rusty in twenty years.'

'That rose!' said the lady, '—that rose! I am sure it was that or the one next to it.'

Her companion advanced and pressed upon the spot in the cornice which she pointed out. It instantly gave way under his stronger hand; the moulding fell forward like the front of some ancient scrutoire, and at the same moment a parchment rolled out and dropped at the lady's feet. She instantly picked it up and pressed it to her heart, and then, turning to the names that were signed at the end, endeavored to read them, but in vain.

'It matters not,' she said, 'it matters not! This is the contract. There is nothing else there,—let us begone.'

'It is better to be quite sure,' replied her companion; and, putting his hand into the cavity from which the parchment had fallen, he speedily produced another, though very much smaller in size.

'Here is another deed,' he said; 'most likely the procurement of some relation.'

'True,' she answered; 'true, I had forgot that; but it is not of as much consequence as the other. Now let us go.'

'You had better do so, madam,' replied her companion; 'for the carriage will carry you to Figeac speedily. I must remain, however, and see that these men do their duty—though the search is all nonsense, and they will find nothing.'

'I suppose so,' answered the lady; 'but how happens it, I wonder, that such suspicion should arise without a cause?'

'Some enemy!' replied the gentleman. 'Unhappily a minister's ears are always open to every accusation. To be accused is often as bad as to be criminal; and the Count de Castelleau may well think himself lucky to have nothing worse to undergo than a mere journey to Paris, if as I believe, some powerful enemy has accused him.'

'That enemy has been my best friend,' replied the lady; 'but I will hasten away now, and wait for you at Fig-ac.'

Thus saying, she retired from the dressing room, and again paused before the picture in the other chamber; but, as time act-upon the memories of objects past, the evening light had faded upon that portrait. When she had before seen it, the form, the features, the dress, were all distinct, though the coloring was somewhat grey and cold; now all was confused and obscure,—there was neither hue nor exact form left, and the vague figure of a man mounting his horse was traced more by the aid of recollection than the eye.

The lady passed on; and the gentleman who was with her, taking care to close every door behind them, and to remove all trace of their visit, followed her quickly, and accompanied her through the same corridors and rooms which they had passed before, down the great staircase into the courtyard. A number of men were drawn up there in deep silence, at a short distance from a carriage to which were attached four horses; and at some distance beyond appeared a number of the servants of the Count de Castelleau. The latter, however, seemed either stupefied or overawed; for they remained motionless and unconcerned while the stranger handed the lady into the vehicle. As he was about to retire from the door of the carriage, she bent forward and said, 'I am sure you would suffer me to see her if it were possible.'

'It is wholly impossible, madam,' he answered, 'without ruin to all;' and, bowing low, he retired into the chateau.

During the greater part of that night lights were seen in the various parts of the building, and the servants of the Count de Castelleau remained watching with some anxiety proceedings which caused them great apprehension, but which they could not prevent. Strange to say, however, the whole passed with so much quietness and silence, that neither Annette, nor her maid who slept in a neighboring chamber, nor old Donnine, who, ever since the young lady had been a child, claimed a room as close to that of Mademoiselle de St Morin as possible, was ever awakened.

Early on the following day, when Donnine, who retained all the maternal habits of her youth, rose and proceeded to resume the cares of the household which she superintended, the whole bevy of maidens under her sage charge and governance assailed her at once with accounts of the domiciliary visit which had been paid to the chateau by a large body of police.

They had gone through all the count's apartments, she was told; had examined his papers, and opened all his cabinets and drawers,—at least so the servants inferred; for, be it remarked, they were themselves excluded from the chambers where the police were pursuing their avocations, except when some information or assistance was necessary. They, moreover, told Donnine that the gentleman who commanded the police had taken particular pains not to make any noise or disturbance, and had said that there was no use of searching Mademoiselle de St. Morin's apartments, or waking her from her sleep. On receiving this information, Donnine consulted with herself whether she should or should not inform her young lady of what had occurred, and she determined not to do so till Annette had risen and breakfasted.

All her wise precautions were, however, in vain; for Annette's maid, who, amongst other good qualities, possessed the peculiar faculty of the parrot and the magpie, repeated like them every thing that she heard, caught some ten words of the intelligence as she leaned over the stairs, and, running instantly into Annette's room, woke her with the tidings that the house had been visited by the police, who had carried off every paper they could find. With the common babble, in short, of persons in her situation, she told all that she knew, and a great deal more; and the consequence was, that Annette, who was still suffering considerably from the effects of her fall, and who would certainly not have risen that day had it not been for some extraordinary cause, began to dress herself immediately, and was on the eve of going down, when Donnine appeared to enquire how she had passed the night.

Without delay, Annette proceeded through the chambers which had been visited during the night, and found that the papers had not been carried away, though they had been examined. One scrutinie and one desk she found closed by a double seal connected by a thick piece of parchment; and after considering for some moments what this appearance might indicate, and what should be her own conduct, she thought that the best plan of proceeding would be to write immediately to the Baron de Nogent, asking advice from his better experience. She accordingly did so, and at the same time despatched a letter by a special courier to the Count de Castelleau, hoping that information of what had taken place might reach him before he quitted Limoges.

CHAPTER III

The Count de Castelleau leaned back in his carriage and thought of Annette, while the slow wheels, at the rate of about five miles an hour, rolled him onward towards Paris. Perhaps never had he known the tediousness of life before, for the thoughts of an active and busy mind had always furnished sufficient employment for each leisure moment; but now he had wherewithal to measure the minutes, though not to occupy them, and each mile that he was borne away from the society which he loved best seemed but

to increase the slowness of time's tardy flight. There was nothing on the road to amuse or interest him: he had seen every tree and every stone, in the course of the first twenty miles, a hundred times before; and the physician, who sat beside him in the carriage, after having made a vain attempt to converse upon indifferent topics, had sunk back into the corner, where he now lay pillowed on the soft bosom of sleep.

The count then communed with himself, and the chief subject of thought was Annette de St. Morin. He asked himself what were his real feelings, what his own most secret wishes and purposes. He was a great doubter of his own heart. He knew it—that sad, frail, wily thing, the human heart—he knew it by experience to be the most deceitful of all things; and, alas, still worse! more deceitful to those who trust it than to any others. He asked himself whether, were Annette herself willing to give him her hand, he would really seek to wed her. He answered, 'No!' boldly, almost indignantly. Such a purpose, such a wish, he thought, had never entered his mind. Not to lose her society was all that he desired. But the next question was, how her constant companionship was to be preserved without wedding her? Could he keep her who was so formed for domestic happiness lingering out her days almost in solitude? could he condescend to watch her lest her heart should choose for itself, to exclude all who might please, attract, or win her? Would it be wise? would it be just? Oh, no! his own heart forbade the thought at once; but then, with what art it suggested again that the only means of gaining both objects, of retaining Annette for ever near him, and yet suffering her to know all the blessings of domestic life, and all the high pleasures of well-chosen society, was to make her his own by the bond of marriage. She had never yet, he thought, seen any one to love but himself. All her first affections were his: those affections were evidently like the love of a daughter to a father, it was true; but might they not easily be changed into warmer and tenderer feelings? As he reflected upon it, however, he shrunk from the idea; he thought almost with horror of losing the fond name of father which she gave him, even to assume that of husband; and he covered his eyes with his hand, and turned away his mind from the subject.

'I will think of it no more,' he said; but, alas! to have thought of it at all was a step gained by the adversary, from which he was only to be driven by pain and sorrow. The count kept his resolution for the time, however; turned his mind to other things, asking himself a thousand questions regarding his sudden call to Paris; and busied his imagination in enquiring, who had really laid the charge against him, and what that charge actually was. There was a vague apprehension presented itself from time to time, a spectre rising from the shadowy night of the past, and flitting before his eyes, faint and indistinct yet dark and horrible; but he would not, he dared not, suffer that spectre to come near. He drove it away with a scoff, while it was yet afar, though, had he suffered it to approach close

to his eyes, it would have overpowered him altogether. He concluded, with Annette—he chose to conclude that his accuser must be the Baron de Cajare, that the object was to bring his fair ward to Paris, and the charge some of those idle accusations which the French government in that day was always very willing to employ, in order to force the provincial nobles into the capital.

At length the carriage stopped in order that the horses might be changed at a little inn and post-house between Cahors and Limoges, which he had known well in former years, and where, as it was a pleasant spot in a beautiful country, he had spent sometimes weeks together. The hostess had been a very gay and pretty woman, a year or two younger than himself; and with her, in his early days of levity, he had often indulged in many an idle and over-familiar jest. It was now night; the country round he could not see; but there came to the side of the carriage an old woman, bearing the light, and courtesying low to the strange gentleman, as she announced herself as the post-mistress.

The count gazed at her attentively; she was the same gay personage he had formerly known; but, oh, how changed! She had sunk, in those twenty, or two and twenty years, into a coarse and withered old dame. The freshness of the cheek, the neat waist, the smart foot and ankle, were all gone. Much exposure and work, as well as some care and anxiety, had left her brown and shrivelled, and not a trace of beauty or of youth remained.

Monsieur de Castelneau gazed and felt how time had passed; and, as the idea he had entertained of wedding Annette came up for an instant before his mind, he applied the homily to his own heart, and a sneering smile came upon his lip at the thought of his own weakness.

It rarely happens, when we are tempted to evil thoughts or evil deeds, that some warning is not whispered in our ear, that some obstacle is not thrown in our way. It is only, in short, when our heart takes part with the temptation that we fall,—and then, fall without palliation. The count, however, was eager to prevent his mind from yielding to what he felt was wrong, and he made the best use of the little incident which had occurred. He looked out at the post-mistress; she did not know him in the least.—He spoke to her for a moment or two; she did not even recognise his voice.

'I am as much changed as she is,' he said to himself; and when I can imagine that ardent youth in its first freshness can feel passion for age like this, then I may expect that Annette may love me, as a wife should love her husband. He cast the idea once more from him, as a thing vain and absurd, and made the postillions drive on as quickly as possible.

The journey of that day, however, was of course short, from the lateness of the hour at which the count had taken his departure; but the act of travelling seemed rather to have done him good than otherwise. He slept better than he had done for many nights previous, and woke

early the following day prepared to pursue his way. His valet appeared to dress him as soon as he was up and had performed his devotions; and, as the man bustled about the room, first bringing one article to his master, and then another, he seemed struck with something which appeared upon the table, and handed the count a note, asking him if he had seen it.

Monsieur de Castelleau took it from his hand; looked at the seal; and then with a contracted brow and somewhat wild expression of countenance gazed in the man's face; and then, as if with a great effort, tore open the note.

It contained but three words, 'Go in peace!' but these words seemed to take a load off the count's mind, and he asked eagerly who had placed the note upon his table. All his own servants, and all the servants of the inn, denied, with every appearance of honesty, that they had done any thing of the kind, and the count was obliged to proceed on his way without any farther information concerning the event.

At Limoges, Monsieur de Castelleau received Annette's letter, informing him of the visit of the police, and the search for papers which had been made at the chateau. These tidings, though they led him to suppose that the charge was somewhat serious, only made him smile, as he well knew that nothing could be found at Castelleau which could show him to be implicated in any designs against the government.—He answered Annette's letter before he set out, telling her how confident he was in his own innocence, and giving her the still better intelligence of his hourly improving health and of the great benefit which the act of traveling seemed to produce. He then hastened on to Paris; and we shall not pause on any farther incidents of his journey, which passed quietly by, with only such little accidents and inconveniences as befall all travellers in those days.

The count alighted at one of those large furnished hotels which were then common in Paris, but which have very generally given way to more convenient places of abode for the lonely traveller. It was about three o'clock in the day when he arrived; but the aspect of the great city, after having for so many years enjoyed the calm and quiet scenes of the country, lay heavy and gloomy upon his heart. There were none of the sights or sounds which refresh the eye or the ear; there was nothing to divert any sense from the consciousness of being in the midst of a wide and heartless multitude, with one feeling in common with any of the human beings who surrounded him. The count was somewhat fatigued also, and he therefore determined to pass the rest of the day in repose, and to wait until the next ere he visited the Duke de Choiseul, who had signed the letter, commanding him to appear in Paris.

It proved unfortunate that he did so; for, on sending the next day to enquire at what hour the duke would receive him, he found that the minister had quitted Paris the preceding night for his country seat, called Chanteloup, in the beautiful valley of Arpajon, and was not expected to return for several days. Knowing that in

the court of Louis the Fifteenth, as in all other despotic courts, prompt obedience at the first summons is always looked upon with much favor, the count now hesitated as to what course he should pursue, in order to show that he had lost not a moment's time in executing the king's commands.

Neither Versailles nor Arpajon was very far from Paris; but the count, from his old knowledge of monarchs and statesmen, judged that it would be best to show his obedience to the minister even before the king, and he consequently ordered horses to be put to his carriage, and took the road to Chanteloup.

Perfectly at his ease in regard to any offence against the government, Monsieur de Castelleau gazed forth upon the country, and endeavored to amuse his mind with the scenery between Paris and Arpajon. As every one must know who has travelled on the road to Etampes, there is nothing very striking to be seen by the way, except occasionally some beautiful chateau and parks, and the hill of Montlhery, with its curious old tower. But just at the moment that the count was gazing forth from the window of the carriage, and raising his eyes towards that tower with the smile of one who recognises an old friend, a carriage, with a musketeer on either side, passed him at a rapid rate on the way towards Paris. In the inside of the carriage was a gentleman, whom Monsieur de Castelleau instantly recognised as the Baron de Cajare; but the two vehicles had rolled past each other before he could at all see who was the person that occupied another seat in the carriage with the baron.

A few minutes more brought the count to the chateau of Chanteloup; and, passing through the park, he was soon in the great court, whence he sent in a servant to demand audience of the minister. Every thing now passed with the utmost rapidity: the innumerable domestics who were seen hurrying about the chateau seemed endowed with superhuman agility; so quick were all their motions, so rapidly they came and disappeared. It was simply, however, that the character of their master, in this as in almost all cases, affected his dependants; and scarcely could the count alight from his carriage and enter the hall, ere the messenger who had gone to the duke returned, desiring him to follow.—Passing through one or two rooms filled with most beautiful pictures—some of the Italian and French school, but more of the Flemish—the count was led to a large library, of which the servant threw open the door, announcing him in a loud voice.

On the other side of the room, seated at a table, and writing with the utmost rapidity, was a gentleman of very diminutive stature, extremely ugly in face, and with that dark saurine complexion which is more commonly met with in the French capital than any where else. Yet there was something in that countenance so full of fire and animation, thought and intelligence, that the expression was worth all the beauty which ever was given to man. As soon as the count entered, the duke laid down his

pen, rose from his seat, crossed the room with infinite grace and dignity, and, taking his visitor by the hand, pointed to a chair near a window which looked out upon the park, saying, 'In one moment I shall be at your service; my letter is nearly finished. Your goodness will excuse me, I am sure. From that window you will find a fine view. Fancy it but a picture by Poussin, and you will have occupation for five minutes, at least.'

'It is from the hand of a greater master, my lord,' replied the count, 'whose pictures, to say the truth, I am fonder of contemplating than even those of Poussin himself.'

'True, sir, true,' replied the duke, in his quick way; 'I perfectly agree with you: but we value the handiwork of Poussin, perhaps because we pay for it, more than the works of nature, because they are freely given by the bounty of God. We are a sad obtuse race, Monsieur le Comte, and we need to be flogged into liking what is good: we value nothing that we are not charged any thing for; but, as I said, I will be at your service in a minute.'

He then seated himself once more at the table, while the count took the chair near the window, and gazed forth upon the valley of Arpajon. Its green freshness was cheering to his eye, and he certainly could not have found a more pleasant subject of contemplation than the soft calm valley, with the sweet little stream flowing in the midst.

While he sat there, it three or four times occurred that a secretary entered from a room at the side, and presented a paper to the duke in silence. Choiseul took it, glanced his eye rapidly over it, signed his name at the bottom, and gave it back again without a word. All was rapid and energetic in his house as in his ministry, and not a moment was lost while business was going forward. At the end of about five minutes, or rather more, the letter was concluded, folded up, sealed, and the small silver bell which stood at his right hand rung. Its tongue was scarcely still, and its place upon the table resumed, when a servant appeared and approached with a bow. The duke gave the man the letter, saying, 'A horse and courier to Versailles. Back by four o'clock!'

The servant again bowed and retired; and the duke, laying down the pen which he had continued to hold, rose from his seat, and, seeming to cast off the load of care, advanced towards the window where the count was seated, saying with a smile, 'And now, Monsieur le Comte de Castelneau, to resume what we were talking about. That is a most beautiful scene, is it not?'

'I have seen more beautiful,' replied the count, 'and have just come from amongst them.'

'That is the reason,' replied the Duke de Choiseul, 'why you and I estimate this view differently. You come from the bright scenes of Quercy, green fields, old castles, fine ruins, broad rivers, manifold streams and fountains.—I recollect it all very well. I come from amidst grey houses, dusty streets, dull bureaux, in Paris; and from gold fringes, satin curtains, and buhl

tables at Versailles. Therefore this view strikes me as the sweetest thing the eye can look upon. But there is more in it still. You and I, had we the magic power of one of the necromancers whom good Monsieur Galland has told us of, and could bring hither ~~whatever~~ prospect we chose, would each pitch upon a very different view from the other, and yet we should both be right. This may seem very strange, but it is true.'

'I can easily conceive it is, my lord,' replied the count.

'In what way, in what way, may I ask?' said the Duke de Choiseul, with his peculiar grace of manner. 'I would fain know if our reasonings on this subject are the same.'

'I suppose, my lord,' replied the count, in his usual calm and thoughtful tone, 'I suppose that you, continually busied in matters of the deepest importance, harassed with the cares and the wants of a whole nation, and contemplating daily matters in themselves vast, striking, and terrible, must naturally prefer, in a place where you seek temporary repose, all that is calm, quiet, and refreshing—softness without asperities, and variety without abruptness.'

'Exactly, exactly!' replied the duke, his whole face lighting up with a smile; 'and you, on your part, living in calm and quiet retirement, would prefer what is more bold and striking to the eye; something, in short, that excites the imagination through the sight, and stirs up within us a gentle sort of agitation, sufficient to give life and variety to thought; that might, otherwise wear and overload the mind.'

'You have expressed my feelings on this subject, my lord,' replied the count, 'as if you could see into my breast.'

'I do!' answered the Duke de Choiseul; 'and therefore I say, Monsieur de Castelneau, that you may go back to Paris with the most perfect ease and tranquility of mind. I want no further conversation with you, to show me that you have not been mingling in the dangerous and exciting course of faction and sedition, otherwise you would love the calm scene as well as I do. You may return, then, at ease—'

'To Castelneau?' said the count.

'No, I must not exactly say that,' replied the Duke de Choiseul, 'till I have heard the king's pleasure on the subject. But you may go back to Paris without any disquietude—unless, indeed, you will do the duchess and myself the honor of dining here to-day, when I can show you some other pictures, as you say, not by so great a master as that, but perhaps by the finest painters who have ever imitated works of the Great Artificer of all.'

'Nay, my lord,' replied the count with a smile: 'I am but a rude countryman, and for many years have mingled little with society.'

'I will not take a refusal,' replied the duke.—'I do not know that any one is expected, and therefore I will conduct you to the duchess, who will entertain you for half an hour while I conclude the business of the day: forgive me for preceding you, that I may show the way.'

'There is one question, my lord,' said Monsieur de Castelneau, as they went on, 'which I would fain ask, if you will permit me.'

'What is that, count? what is that?' said the duke. 'I will answer freely if I can.'

'It is simply, my lord,' replied the count, 'to whom am I indebted for the pleasant suspicions which it seems have been entertained of my conduct?'

'Nay, nay, nay! Monsieur de Castelneau,' exclaimed the duke with a laugh, 'we must be upon honor with our good *mouchards*. Why, if we give them up on every piece of information that we receive, there would be nothing but cudgeling one honest man or another of them in Paris, all day long.'

'He was not a very honest man, my lord,' replied the count, 'who made this charge against me; and I strongly suspect that he was no *mouchard* either.'

'Then you have your eye upon some one,' said the duke immediately. 'Whom do you suspect?'

'The Baron de Cajare,' replied the count at once.

The Duke de Choiseul laughed. 'How secrets betray themselves, Monsieur de Castelneau!' he said: 'it is clear, then, you have some quarrel with the Baron de Cajare.'

'Not in the least, my lord duke,' replied the count. 'When last we met we were upon friendly terms; but, though I have not betrayed the secret, I will tell it without hesitation. The Baron de Cajare somewhat covets the hand and fortune of a young lady under my care: he has not prospered much in his suit with her, and would fain have her and myself in Paris that he may pursue it further.'

'Ha! is that it?' said the Duke de Choiseul, with a thoughtful smile. 'The Baron de Cajare is in the Bastille—at least I trust that he is there by this time, for he left me an hour ago to return thither. But come, let us join the duchess, count. She shall show you her collection of miniatures.'

CHAPTER IV.

The Duchess of Choiseul was a woman of very superior mind. She received the count de Castelneau with kindness and affability, but with a degree of reserve; for it seems that she had known something of him in former years, when he was the Abbe de Castelneau, and she Countess de Stainville, her husband not having at that time reached the eminent station which he now filled. Her first recollections, therefore, of Monsieur de Castelneau were not favorable; but a very few minutes' conversation with him removed the bad impression; and when she heard of years passed in solitude in the country, when she heard him talk of his abhorrence of Paris, of his desire to return to the calm shades of Castelneau, and marked the distaste he felt towards the gay and glittering society of the capital, she saw evidently that he was a man upon whom time and thought had produced a beneficial effect, and whose heart had been ultimately amended, rather than depraved, by its commerce

with the world. The hour which he spent with her alone was thus rendered not an unpleasant one. They spoke not of the past, but in all probability they both thought of it; and that thought, as the far retrospect of memory always does, mingled some melancholy, but of a sweet and gentle kind, with their other feelings; so that, when the duke returned, it needed several minutes of the society of the most cheerful man in France to enliven the conversation and turn it into a gayer course.

The duke, who could, when he so pleased, lay aside entirely the minister and statesman, and appear simply as the highly accomplished French gentleman, now threw off the reserve of his station with the Count de Castelneau, and led him through the apartments of his chateau, showing him all those fine pictures, gems, coins, and other objects of art, for which Chanteloup was at one time famous. He found his companion nothing inferior to himself in taste or acquaintance with the arts, and much his superior in learning; and many an elaborate discussion took place upon the merits of this or that object, the minister conducting it with all his wit, fluency, and grace, Monsieur de Castelneau replying more shortly, but from a fund of knowledge and judgment which left little more to be said. There was sufficient difference of opinion between the duke and his guest to make their communication varied and entertaining, yet a sufficient similarity to render it conversation rather than argument.

More than an hour was thus passed in that sort of conversation which was the greatest possible relief to the mind of Choiseul; and, on their return to the apartments of the duchess, they found her with a young gentleman in a military costume seated on a footstool at her feet, with his elbow leaning on the ground, and his eyes raised to the countenance of the lady. The moment the duke and his companion entered, the other gentleman rose, and the minister greeted him with a smile.

'Ah, Ernest!' said the duke. 'What brings you here, you wild youth? I hope this is not a new absence without leave.'

'Oh no, my dear lord,' replied the other. 'I have full leave at this moment; for since I left my father on Saturday week, I have been at our head-quarters, received my reprimand, and obtained permission to come hither to excuse myself to the king.'

'Was your reprimand severe?' asked the duke with a peculiar smile, well knowing that he had taken means to render it the contrary.

The young gentleman laughed. 'Severe and cutting as the breath of the southerly wind,' he said. 'Oh, no, my lord, I owe you all thanks; but I am sure your own heart justifies you in having interceded for me.'

'I should not have done it otherwise, Ernest, had you been my own son,' replied Choiseul; 'but though you had committed a fault which could not be passed over without some notice, yet the call to your father's sick bed—to his death bed, as you had reason to think it—was an excuse valid in mitigation, especially when

you were not actually in campaign, and when your presence was evidently not required with your regiment. It was not absolutely necessary that you should present yourself before the king; but perhaps it is better, in order that this affair may not stop your promotion. Your father is nearly well, I find. I had a letter from him this morning.'

The young gentleman replied that he had also heard from his father; and the duke, then turning to Monsieur de Castelneau, said: 'You must allow me, count, to introduce to you a young gentleman from your own part of the country—a nephew of Madame de Choiseul—Monsieur de Nogent.—Ernest, this is your neighbor, the Count de Castelneau.'

The young gentleman started with surprise; but the count took his hand, expressing much pleasure in seeing him, and adding a commendation of the good old Baron de Nogent, short, indeed, and simple, but in such terms as brought a glistening light into the son's eyes.

'Your good opinion of him, Monsieur de Castelneau,' replied Ernest de Nogent, 'must be most gratifying to him, as I know he esteems you highly. May I ask,' he continued, 'how was your fair ward when you left Castelneau, which must have been some days, I presume, after I quitted that part of the country myself?'

'I travelled but slowly,' replied the count, 'as I have been suffering much in health. Annette, I am happy to say, though not well enough to accompany me, was in no danger.'

'Ill, ill!' exclaimed Ernest de Nogent, with a look that astonished not only the count, but Monsieur and Madame Choiseul also, not a little—so eager, so anxious, so apprehensive was it. 'The last time I saw her she seemed in perfect health.'

'I did not know that you were acquainted with her,' said the count, with an air of more surprise than pleasure.

'Oh, yes!' answered Monsieur de Nogent, 'though my acquaintance with Mademoiselle de St. Morin is of a very recent date, it is quite sufficient to interest me deeply in her welfare. It began by my rendering her a slight service, when she was attacked by a wolf.'

'Oh, now I comprehend, now I comprehend!' exclaimed the count, taking his hand, and shaking it warmly. 'I owe you many thanks, Monsieur de Nogent, for saving the life of one most dear to me. I must write to Annette, and let her know who was her deliverer, for, at the time, she was ignorant of your name.'

'I dared not give it,' replied Ernest de Nogent, 'for I was at that time absent from my regiment without leave, living in close concealment in my father's house, and only venturing out through the woods to meet the person who conveyed my letters to and from Paris; for I had taken care to interest Monsieur de Choiseul in my cause, by representing to him that nothing but the state of my father's health had induced me to commit what was, in truth, a breach of duty.'

'You said your acquaintance with Annette commenced,' said the count, returning to the

point which most interested his mind. 'Have you, then, seen her since?'

'Oh, yes,' replied Ernest de Nogent; 'I saw her at my father's house, on the very day I set off to rejoin the army. She then ascertained who I was, and I suppose some accidental circumstance must have prevented her from telling the facts to you.'

The count paused, and meditated for a minute, but the cloud gradually left his brow.—'Yes,' he said thoughtfully, 'yes, there were circumstances that prevented her from explaining the facts, and I am sorry to say those very circumstances are connected with her illness. You must, then, have left Castel Nogent on the same day that I quitted Castelneau; and on that very day, in returning from her visit to your father, her horse took fright at a flash of lightning, while she was suffering him to drink in the stream, and she was consequently thrown and considerably injured by the fall. I did not leave her, however, till the surgeons assured me there was no danger; and I have since heard from her, giving me the assurance that she was even better than when I left her.'

'I am happy, most happy, to hear it,' replied Ernest de Nogent; and then he fell into a fit of thought, from which he did not rouse himself till he found the eyes of all present fixed somewhat intently upon him. He cast it off as soon as he perceived that such was the case, and made an effort to talk cheerfully on other subjects, in which he succeeded. But what the Count de Castelneau had observed, had cast him in turn, into a reverie, and, notwithstanding all his natural command over himself, he could not resist the strong impression upon him, but remained till dinner was announced, somewhat silent and gloomy, occupied by one of those internal struggles which absorb all the energies of the mind, and leave the material organs to act merely as parts of a machine, moved by the great spring of habit.

By the time, however, that the meal was served, and he had sat down to table, he had again conquered; and he had successfully repelled the assault of the evil spirit upon his heart, and driven him back, though the defenses of the place might be injured by the siege that it had undergone. In such a warfare, men would do well to remember that the enemy is one who never altogether raises that siege, but proceeds day after day, while the fortress crumbles down before him, unless some glorious and mighty help is sought and obtained to succor the distressed garrison.

At dinner, then, the Count de Castelneau resumed all his cheerfulness, spoke kindly and warmly to Ernest de Nogent, and could not help acknowledging to himself that in him there were evident many excellent qualities, of which the Baron de Cajare had shown no sign. The Duke of Choiseul, on his part, had already remarked several things in the demeanor, both of the Count de Castelneau and of Ernest de Nogent, which excited his curiosity; and he determined to unravel the mystery, if mystery there were; but the task of prying into the heart of

the Count de Castelneau, was no slight one; and notwithstanding all his penetration, Choiseul remained at fault.

The heart of Ernest de Nogent, however, was much more easily to be studied; and as the duke led the conversation back to the subject of Mademoiselle de St. Morin, and made the young officer give the whole particulars of the adventure with the wolf, the changes of Ernest's countenance might have shown to eyes less penetrating than those which looked upon him, that there was a deeper interest in his bosom towards her whom he had saved than could arise from the incident itself, or from the effect of a mere passing acquaintance.

'Well, now, Ernest,' said the duke, after the conversation had gone on for some time, 'you shall let us know what you think of Mademoiselle de St. Morin. From something which Monsieur de Castelneau said a minute or two ago, I am inclined to think she is extremely beautiful. Is it not so, Monsieur de Castelneau?'

'I really do not know,' replied the count, 'from what part of my discourse your lordship's keen wit has derived information of a fact which I am not at all inclined to deny. As far as my poor judgment goes, Annette is indeed most beautiful. But of course I am not so good a judge as young men.'

'The deduction was very easy, Monsieur de Castelneau,' replied the duke, who rather prided himself upon the rapidity of his calculations.—'What you said regarding Monsieur le Baron de Cajare led me at once to conclude that the young lady was very beautiful. You would not have suspected him of taking such rash measures unless you suspected him of being very much in love; and he is not a man to be much in love with any thing less than transcendent beauty.'

The count smiled, but did not reply, and the duke went on to press his wife's nephew upon the subject, saying: 'But come, Ernest, you have not answered my question. What is your opinion of my young lady's beauty?'

'I can but say that she is very beautiful,' replied Ernest de Nogent, 'indeed the most beautiful being that I ever beheld; for her beauty is not in her features alone, but in the expression, which is ever changing, but ever perfect.'

'Hyperbole, hyperbole! my dear Ernest,' cried the Duchess of Choiseul. 'How can the expression be always changing, and yet always perfect? If it is perfect at one moment, any change from that must be less perfect.'

'Oh, my dear aunt,' replied the young officer, 'the Abbe Barthelemi has spoilt you, by teaching you metaphysics. Give me that ring off your finger.'

'A modest request, indeed,' said the duchess, but taking off the ring at the same time, and holding it out to her nephew.

'Look at this diamond,' said Ernest de Nogent with a smile: 'what color does it reflect when I turn it thus?'

'Green,' replied the duchess.

'And when I turn it thus?' demanded her nephew.

'Bright yellow,' she replied.

'And thus?' he continued.

'Pure rose color' was the answer.

'And each as bright as the other, my dear aunt, are they not?' continued Ernest de Nogent, giving her back the ring; 'and such is the expression of Mademoiselle de St. Morin's countenance, ever varying, but always perfectly bright and beautiful.'

'You deserve the ring for your illustration,' replied the duchess, rolling it across the table to him. 'If the young lady's heart be as much a diamond as you represent her to be, she must, indeed be worthy of the noblest race in the country.'

Monsieur de Castelneau would fain have missed; but he struggled with himself, and overcame the temptation. Nay more, he took part again in the conversation regarding Annette, assured the Duchess of Choiseul that her person afforded but a faint image of her heart and mind; and turning to the duke, he added,—

'Just as it seems to me, my lord, that a picture, however masterly, is but an imperfect image of what we see in nature.'

The duke smiled at this return of what they had been talking of before, and replied, 'You are such an admirer of the beauties of nature, Monsieur de Castelneau, that, ere you return to Paris, I must take you through our park here in the direction of Versailles, where we have even more beauty than towards Arpajon.'

The conversation now deviated into other channels, and fell upon subjects of general interest till dinner was concluded. After a short pause in the saloon of the duchess, the duke proposed to Monsieur de Castelneau that they should walk forth into the park. Madame de Choiseul, however remained at home; and Ernest de Nogent, though he would willingly have accompanied the Count de Castelneau, whose good opinion he was very desirous of cultivating, determined to stay with his aunt, not knowing what sort of communication the minister might be desirous of holding with his guest. The subjects started, however, were altogether general, and referred principally to matters of art and taste. But they returned, indeed, the curious circumstance of Monsieur de Castelneau meeting his young neighbor Ernest de Nogent there, led the Duc de Choiseul on to speak of the young officer's character and family. Of Ernest himself he gave an account which, from the lips of the duke, was commendation indeed.

'We love him scarcely less than if he were our own son,' he said; 'but I have made it a point not to press any members of my own family into public employments. Fortune he has little or none, poor fellow, and must make his way with his sword; for, alas! so little flows into my coffers for my services to the state, and so much flows out of them to supply some of the necessities of the state*, that though we may re-

* This is known to have been absolutely the fact. The Duc de Choiseul having more than once supplied, from his own fortune, deficiencies in the revenue, which other ministers might have taken less generous means to fill up.

gret that we have no children of our own, it is probably far better that such is the case.'

'I did not know, my lord,' replied the count, 'that the Duchess de Choiseul had a sister, and still less did I know that her sister had married Monsieur de Nogent. I always understood that that gentleman had married Mademoiselle de Lisle, while the duchess I remember well as the heiress of the noble house of Du Chatel.'

'True, true,' replied the duke, 'Madam de Nogent was her half-sister,—the same mother, but another father. Poor Marie de Lisle had little or no fortune of her own, and she married a man who had little fortune either. We minded not that, however, for his blood is as noble as any in France, and though a mis-alliance is what of course, we could not have tolerated for a moment, we cared not for the accidental circumstances of fortune:—indeed, my sweet lady herself gave part of her own, to increase that of her sister.'

'Then notwithstanding all the fine new notions of the present day,' said the count, 'you still hold, my lord duke, that there is something in noble blood which should prevent it from allying itself with that of an inferior class.'

'I trust, sir,' replied the duke of Choiseul, raising his head that there is no gentleman of really pure blood in France, that can think otherwise. These new notions that you speak of are but set abroad by men who would fain rise into our stations by any means; and we should hold this barrier but the more firmly against them.'

The count mused: the very same prejudices of birth which had been expressed by the Duc de Choiseul, he had himself combated a thousand times; but there was something in his heart which would not, on the present occasion, let him say one word in opposition to the duke's arguments. The minister remarked his silence, and asked, 'Do you not think so, Monsieur de Castelnau?'

'Perhaps I am not so strongly wedded to such opinions as you are,' replied the count, with an evasion which he did not forgive himself for, even while he used it; 'but so far I do think with you fully, that though no means should be employed to prevent courage, genius, and exertion from raising a man to the very highest point in society, yet we should use all means to prevent any thing but virtue and talents from producing that result.'

The Duke de Choiseul was not quite satisfied with this reply; but it was a matter of no consequence, and they were now taking their way homeward, he turned the conversation to the object which had brought the Count de Castelnau thither, and said, 'Perhaps it may be better for you to see the king at once, when I have made my report to his majesty in regard to our interview of this morning. I shall go over to-morrow to Versailles about eleven; by the hour of noon my private audience will be at an end, and I will then introduce you to his majesty's presence, as well as Ernest, who

has to make his peace, you hear. Nay I ask you to be kind enough to bring him down with you in your carriage to Versailles; for he must go back to Paris to-night, as it will be as well that he should not stop here, till he is reinstated in the royal favor?'

'I shall be most happy, my lord,' replied the count. 'Will not Monsieur de Nogent return in my carriage to Paris?'

'He came on horseback,' replied the duke; 'but doubtless he will prefer your society to a solitary ride.'

The proposal was accordingly made: Ernest de Nogent accepted the offer gladly; and as the carriage proceeded towards Paris, much conversation took place between him and his companion. It was of a pleasant and tranquil kind.—Without knowing why Ernest kept off the subject of Annette; and the Count de Castelnau felt when he parted from him, that, under most circumstances, he could have made that man his friend.

CHAPTER V.

That splendid monstrosity, the palace of Versailles, was certainly not in the same state of magnificence in which it had been placed by the vain ostentation of Louis XIV., but still it displayed a degree of luxury and extravagance which formed a painful contrast with the situation of a suffering and indigent population.—There was also, in the aspect of the people who thronged its saloons and galleries, an air of dissolute frivolity, of careless, mocking superciliousness, which generally marks a court or country on the eve of its downfall. When the great of a nation have learned to feel a contempt for all those things that are in themselves good and great, the nation is soon taught to feel a contempt for the great; and, as a part of the nation, the Count de Castelnau felt no slight portion of scorn for all that surrounded him, as accompanied by Ernest de Nogent, he walked through the crowded halls of the palace, towards the audience which had been promised him by the Duc de Choiseul. He, perhaps, more than any one else, felt and condemned the persons and the scene around him. His eye was fresh from purer things—his mind had been sanctified by a commerce with virtue, truth, and nature—and all the vice, and the idle levity, and the ostentatious nothingness which appeared before his sight, struck him as something new and horrible, though he had witnessed the same scene many a time before.

The conversation of Ernest de Nogent had not tended to smooth the way for the impression made by Versailles. There was a freshness about the young nobleman's mind—a truth, an eagerness, a candor—which harmonised well with the bright simplicity of God's own creations, but were a living reproach to the corrupted manners of that court. Without the slightest idea that the count would entertain towards him any but the most kindly feelings, knowing of no objections which could be raised against his pretensions to Annette, except the compara-

tive poverty of his house, he had striven frankly and freely to please her guardian during their short intercourse, and in spite of very repugnant feelings in the breast of the count, had succeeded.

He was well known to many members of the court, but none knew or recognised the Count de Castelneau; and, as they moved on through those spacious halls, many a gay and glittering officer stopped Ernest de Nogent, spoke a word or two with him on his own account, and then, in a whisper, inquired who was his graver friend. There was something in the air of the count, however in his calm, firm step, his thoughtful but self-possessed demeanor, the slight and somewhat scornful smile that curled his lip, and his stern, irrepressible eye, which produced a feeling of reverence in men who had reverence for very few things on earth, and made them give way before him when they might have jostled a man of superior station.

At length, as the count and his companion approached the door which communicated with the king's apartments, without perceiving any sign that it had been opened that day, Ernest de Nogent asked one of the *garde du corps* if any one had been yet admitted.

'Oh, no!' replied the officer, the king has not come from the *Park au Cerfs*. He has got a fresh importation from Provence, and may be kept these two hours.'

Ernest de Nogent gave a look of disgust, and turned towards the Count de Castelneau, as if to interpret what had been said, but the count bowed his head, and replied to the look—'I heard, my young friend, and understand; such turpitudes, unhappily, fly far.'

The anticipation of the officer of the *garde du corps* did not prove exactly correct. For about half an hour longer the count and Ernest de Nogent were detained, hearing around them more licentious ribaldry, perhaps, than ever was spoken in any other court in Europe. Witty and brilliant it certainly was, as well as scandalous, malicious, and gross; but that wit must always be of a somewhat feeble and debilitated kind, which is obliged to have recourse to calumny and licentiousness to support it under either arm.

At length the door opened, and the Duc de Choiseul himself came forth, brilliantly habited in the costume of the times, and bearing a portfolio under his arm. He spoke a few words with his usual quickness and precision to several persons who stood round the door, and who each passed for a word with a minister. But he pushed his way forward all the time, till his eyes fell upon the Count de Castelneau and Ernest de Nogent. The moment he saw them, he thrust another gentleman out of the way with very little ceremony, and said in a quick tone, as he beckoned them up, 'Come with me, come with me, the king is waiting for you.—Both,' he added, seeing Ernest linger behind—'both of you.'

They followed in silence; and when they had passed through the door into an anteroom, the duke whispered, 'I need not tell you to be cau-

tious. The king is in no very placable mood to-day.—Ernest, no rashness: remember how you once offended when you were page of honor, by a thoughtless reply.'

'I will be careful,' replied the young officer; 'for I must not do discredit to anything you may have said in my favor.'

Passing through another room, the duke led his companions to the door of the king's cabinet, where a page stood to guard against intrusion. The duke entered first; and then returning, brought the two gentlemen into the royal presence, saying,—

'Monsieur de Castelneau, sire!—and my nephew, Ernest de Nogent; whom you were good enough to say that you would see together.'

The only object worthy of remark in the cabinet when the count entered, was a gentleman dressed in black, who was seated at the opposite side of the chamber, with a table on his right hand covered with writing materials, and his foot raised upon a stool. He was by no means a prepossessing person in appearance. Though his features in themselves, were fine, there was a lack of feeling in his countenance—a seeming want of soul in the whole expression, that was very repulsive. There was nothing either inquiring or gracious, or menacing in the face: all was cold; and yet it was cold without dullness. You could not suppose, in looking on those features, that mind was wanting: it was merely an appearance of want of interest in the objects before him, tinged with contempt; but that slight scornful turn of the lip was all that chequered the look of utter apathy with which he regarded the count and his companion.

The complexion of the king, (for he it was) seemed to have once been delicate and womanish; but the skin was now wrinkled with years, the cheeks had fallen in; and a little rouge had evidently been added, where the color had abandoned the cheek, rendering the monarch, any thing but more pleasing in appearance. His lips were thin and pale; and it was impossible to gaze on him without feeling an impression that debauchery more than age had shared in the decay which no art could hide.

The Count de Castelneau, both on account of his age and rank, advanced first on entering the room; but the king called the young officer forward, saying, 'Here Ernest; come hither! So you thought fit to quit your regiment without leave young man.'

'Sire,' replied Ernest de Nogent, advancing, 'I applied for leave; and only ventured upon the rash act which I did commit on account of my father's severe illness.'

'You were very wrong, sir,' replied the king. 'There is no excuse for want of discipline.'

'Most true sire,' answered the young nobleman; 'I am without excuse, and came not to urge any; but merely to cast myself upon your majesty's clemency, trusting you will consider that sometimes our feelings overpower our reason, and that I hastened to my father's side when I heard that he was at the point of death

as I might fly to the side of my king, did I hear he was in peril or in difficulty.'

The monarch turned to the duke; and the count observed that whenever he spoke to the minister, the king's countenance relaxed into a faint smile.

'You say, duke, that he has received his primand?' he asked; and, on the duke bowing his head in token of assent, he went on, 'Well, sir; I have left the matter in the hands of the general, and therefore I shall add nothing to what he has thought fit to do, except a warning to be more careful in the future.—Now, Monsieur de Castelneau, what have you to say?'

'Very little, sire,' replied the count, 'except to wish your majesty good health and high prosperity.'

The king turned to the Duc de Choiseul, and the Duc de Choiseul looked down, without replying.

'Did you not tell me, my lord,' said the king, 'that the Count de Castelneau wished to speak with me?'

'Not precisely, sire,' answered the duke.—'You may recollect that some suspicions were excited.'

'Oh yes, by the Baron de Cajare,' replied the king; 'I remember very well.'

'Will your majesty permit me to remind you,' said the duke, 'that it was by no direct accusation on the part of the baron; but by what he let fall regarding the retired way in which Monsieur de Castelneau lived, when he was speaking of the discontent that has manifested itself in Quercy and the Angenois.'

'It continually happens, your majesty,' said the Count de Castelneau, with a faint smile, 'that when any one wishes to do us an injury, who is too cowardly to make a bold accusation, and too feeble to affect us by open efforts, he endeavors to degrade us in the opinion of those to whom we are most attached, by insinuating what he does not assert; and where he is very mean and very contemptible indeed, he couches his insinuation in such terms as to leave the minds of the persons who hear to draw the deduction that he is afraid to point out himself.—Such has been the case, it would seem, with the Baron de Cajare. He said nothing against me; but told your majesty that I was living a solitary and unsocial life, far from your royal court and person, in the same breath that he spoke of seditions in the neighboring districts, and other things that might well excite your indignation, leaving you to draw the inference that I had some share in these troubles. He forgot, however, to remind your majesty that I had been bred up for a profession which counsels retirement and seclusion; and that—though I never actually entered the church, and certainly did cast off my gown when I unexpectedly came into great wealth and high rank—I remained attached to the clerical profession as Abbe de Castelneau till I had passed the fortieth year of my age. He did not tell you, sire, as he might have told you, that these troubles were in a remote part of the province; that I neither had nor could have any thing to do with them; that

I have never in my life taken any part in either a religious or a political dispute; that I have no communication with refractory parliaments; no dealings with Jesuits; no connection with Jansenists. All this the Baron de Cajare might have told your majesty at the same time; and had he done so, he would have prevented your suspecting for a moment one of your most faithful subjects.'

'You are eloquent, Monsieur de Castelneau,' said the king, with the curl of his lip growing somewhat stronger; 'pray, has the Baron de Cajare any cause of enmity towards you?'

The Duc de Choiseul hastened to interfere; for he knew that the king's mood at that moment was a very irritable and unsettled one.

'Monsieur de Castelneau has explained the whole to me, sire,' he said: 'there is no cause of enmity, indeed; but it would appear that Monsieur de Cajare would fain have the count take up his abode in Paris rather than remain at Castelneau.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed the king, with more animation than usual; 'how so? upon what account?'

'Why, it would seem, sire,' replied the duke, thinking, perhaps, a little of Earnest de Nogent while he spoke, and forgetting the peculiar character and frightful licence of the person he addressed—'it would, sire, that Monsieur de Castelneau has a word, a young lady of very extraordinary beauty—at least if I may judge by Earnest's account. With her the Baron de Cajare has fallen in love; and as he is as much in love with Paris as the lady—and, indeed, cannot absent himself long from the capital—he wished to make your majesty and me the tools of bringing the count and his fair ward to Paris.'

A peculiar, unpleasant, smirking smile came upon the old king's face, as he asked, 'is she in Paris, then, Monsieur de Castelneau?'

'No, sire,' replied the count, 'she is not; I left her behind.'

The Duc de Choiseul perceived at once, from that smile, the evil that he had done without thinking of it; and he hastened to the aid of Monsieur de Castelneau, saying, 'Of course, sire, the count, at once suspecting the Baron de Cajare, and understanding his motives, did not choose to gratify him.'

'We must make him gratify the king,' said Louis XV., with the same meaning and detestable look.

The Count de Castelneau answered boldly; 'In all honorable things, sire, none shall be found more ready to gratify you—Dishonorable things,' he added, neither regarding a frown on the face of Louis nor a sign from the Duc de Choiseul, 'my king knows himself and me, I am sure, too well to ask.'

Louis's brow was as black as night, and his meagre hand grasped the side of his chair, while his foot beat the ground with a sharp quick movement. It was wonderful, however, how far he could conquer himself, when his passions or his vices required an effort; and after remaining in silence for a moment or two, he

turned to Ernest de Nogent, asking, 'Is she so very beautiful then Ernest?'

The young nobleman would willingly have belied poor Annette's beauty, but he dared not tell a falsehood, and he replied, 'She is, indeed, sire, very beautiful.'

A dead pause ensued; no one of course wishing to renew the conversation but the king, and he not knowing very well how to carry it on farther for his own particular views and purposes. At length he said, turning to the duke, 'The baron is in the Bastille, I think, Monsieur de Ceoiseul?'

'He is sire,' replied the duke, hoping to engage another of the king's passions, and make the one counteract the other: 'his insolent disregard of your majesty's express commands, when you directed him to avoid all personal interference with my nephew Ernest; his going down into Querey the very same day that he received notification of your wish to the contrary, taking with him, on his own authority, a guard, evidently for the purpose of disobeying your most strict orders—all these circumstances, sire, together with several others which I shall have to lay before your majesty, ere long, when I have fully investigated them, made me instantly send down the deputy of the lieutenant-general to arrest this contumacious person, and lodge him in the Bastille. I examined him myself for an hour yesterday morning, and met with nothing but cool insolence both toward your majesty and myself.'

The duke had spoken at some length, in order to draw off the king's attention; but Louis was not to be led away from the subject predominant at that moment in his mind; and he asked quietly, 'Pray, Monsieur de Choiseul, how long do you think it may be before the case is complete against the Baron de Cajare?'

The duke did not understand the king's object, and replied, 'Perhaps not for six weeks or two months, sire; for there is a gambling piece of business, where all did not go quite fairly, it would seem, which must be inquired into. One of the party threw himself out of the window and was killed; but several of the officers who were present are now absent in Flanders and on the Rhine.'

'Say three months—say three months, Monsieur de Choiseul, exclaimed Louis,—'we must have his conduct thoroughly sifted. Better say three months.'

'It may very likely be as long as that sire,' replied the duke, who was completely deceived, and thought that he had carried off the king's attention from Annette de St. Morin. 'Probably to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion we shall be that time or more.'

'Very well, then,' said the king, turning to the count, 'we shall command you, as you are particularly interested in this business, to remain in Paris for the space of those three months presenting yourself weekly at our court, in order that we may communicate with you upon the subject when we think fit. You will also, if you take our advice, send for your household,

and bring this young lady from time to time to Versailles. We give her the invitation.'

He spoke with an air of dignity, and contracted brow; and when he had done he bowed his head slightly, to intimate that the audience was at an end.

The count and Ernest de Nogent retired without reply; but the moment they had passed thro' the antechambers and entered the general reception rooms, the young officer turned eagerly to the count, demanding in a low voice, but with an air of terrible anxiety and apprehension, 'What do you intend to do?'

'To obey the king's commands replied the count calmly, 'but not to take his advice.'

'That God!' exclaimed Ernest de Nogent eagerly. 'Oh! Monsieur de Castelneau, be firm—I beseech you be firm.'

'I will my young friend,' replied the count, grasping his hand; 'I will—though from what I have heard you say, I should think that you would rather desire Mademoiselle de St. Morin's presence in Paris, if I understand right that your regiment is quartered in the neighborhood.'

'It is even now marching for Chateau Thierry,' replied the young officer, 'but believe me, Monsieur de Castelneau, I would rather never behold Mademoiselle de St. Morin again, than behold her in the contamination of this place. You know not, you cannot know, all the dark and disgraceful secrets of this very building. It was bad enough when I was here as page of honor, nearly nine years ago, but I understand it is infinitely worse now.'

Scarcely were the words out of his mouth, when his name was called forth from the door of the king's apartments by one of the attendants, and he was forced to go back to the presence of a monarch who was now laboring to blot out by a course of tyranny and debauchery, the memory of all those fair promises which the early part of his reign had afforded.

The count promised to wait for his young companion; and remained standing alone, busying himself with his own thoughts, and heeded but little the various faces that flitted by him. In about ten minutes Ernest de Nogent rejoined him, with a cheek burning, and an eye fixed anxiously on the ground. 'I have kept you, he said—'I have kept you, I am afraid; and I owe any one an apology for making them breathe this air longer than their own business requires. Let us go, Monsieur de Castelneau, let us go.'

Walking rapidly through the rooms, the two gentlemen quitted the palace, and after some little difficulty, found the count's carriage, which was soon rolling with them on the road towards Paris.

'You seem agitated, my young friend,' said the count, as Ernest sat beside him in silence, pressing his clasped hands hard together.

'I am indignant as well as agitated, Monsieur de Castelneau,' replied Ernest. 'I will not offend your ear with that man's inquiries or discourse. I have marred my own fortunes forever, I doubt not; but I care little for that, provided you remain firm, as you have quite the power to do.'

'I give you my word of honor, my young friend,' replied the count, 'that were I to be kept here forever, and my lodging were to be the Bastile to-morrow, on account of my determination, nothing should or shall induce me to send for Annette while the court is in its present degraded state. Sooner than she should

come hither I would send her into a foreign country; for there is no state of banishment equal in anguish to that of virtue amongst evil doers. Let that satisfy you for the present, and remember that better days may yet come.

[To be continued.]

[ORIGINAL.]

LINES ON THE DEATH OF LUCY HOOPER.

WHO DIED IN BROOKLYN, (L. I.) ON THE 1ST OF 8TH MONTH, AGED 24 YEARS.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

They tell me Lucy, thou art dead—
That all of thee we loved and cherished
Has with thy summer roses perished;
And left, as its young beauty fled,
An ashen memory in its stead!—
Cold twilight of a parted day.
That true and loving heart—that gift
Of a mind earnest, clear, profound,
Bestowing, with a glad unthrift,
Its sunny light on all around,
Affinities which only could
Cleave to the Beautiful and Good,—
And sympathies which found no rest
Save with the Loveliest and the Best,—
Of them—of thee remains there nought
But sorrow in the mourner's breast—
A Shadow in the Land of Thought?
No!—Even my weak and trembling faith
Can lift, for thee, the veil which doubt,
And human fear have drawn about
The all-awa'ing scene of death.
Even as thou wast I see thee still;
And, save the absence of all ill,
And pain and weariness, which here
Summoned the sigh or wrung the tear,
The same as when two summer's back
Beside our childhood's Merrimaek,
I saw thy dark eye wander o'er
Stream, sunny upland, rocky shore,
And heard thy low, soft voice alone
Midst lapse of waters, and the tone
Of sere leaves by the west-wind blown,
There's not a charm of soul or brow—
Of all we knew and loved in thee
But lives in holier beauty now,
Baptised in Immortality!
Not mine the sad and freezing dream
Of sou's that with their earthly mould
Cast off the loves and joys of old—
Unbodied—like a pale moonbeam
As pure, as passionless, and cold;
Nor mine the hope of Indra's son
Of slumbering in oblivion's rest,
Life's myriads blending into one—

In blank Annihilation blest;
Dust-atoms of the Infinite—
Sparks scattered from the central light,
And winning back through mortal pain,
Their old unconsciousness again!—
No!—I have FRIENDS in Spirit-Land,—
Not shadows in a shadowy band—
Not others, but themselves, are they.
And still I think of them the same
As when the Master's summons came,
Their change—the holy morn-light, breaking
Upon the dream-worn sleeper, waking—
A change from Twilight into Day!—

They've laid thee midst the household graves,
Where Father, Brother, Sister, lie,
Below thee sweep the dark blue waves,
Above thee bends the summer sky!—
Thy own loved Church in sadness read
Her solemn ritual o'er thy head,
And blessed and hallowed with her prayer
The turf laid lightly o'er thee there.
That church, whose rites and hurgy
Sublime and old, were truth to thee,
Undoubted, to thy bosom taken
As symbols of a Faith unshaken.
Even I, of simpler views, could feel
The beauty of thy trust and zeal;
And, owning not thy creed, could see
How life-like it must seem to thee,
And how thy fervent heart had thrown
O'er all, a coloring of its own,
And kindled up intense and warm
A life in every rite and form;
As, when on Chebar's banks of old
The Hebrew's gorgeous vision rolled,
A spirit filled the vast machine—
A life 'within the wheels' was seen!
Farewell!—a little time and we
Who knew thee well, and loved thee here,
One after one shall follow thee,
As pilgrims through the Gate of Fear
Which opens on Eternity.
Yet shall we cherish not the less

All that is left our hearts meanwhile,
 The memory of thy loveliness
 Shall round our weary pathway smile,
 Like moonlight when the sun has set,
 A sweet and tender radiance yet.
 Thoughts of thy clear-eyed sense of Duty,
 Thy generous scorn of all things wrong—
 The truth, the strength, the graceful beauty
 Which blended in thy song.
 All lovely things by thee beloved
 Shall whisper to our hearts of thee,

These green hills where thy childhood roved—
 Yon river winding to the sea,—
 The sunset-light of Autumn eves
 R-fleeting on the deep, still floods,
 Cloud, crimson sky, and trembling leaves
 Of rainbow-tinted woods,—
 These, in our view, shall henceforth take,
 A tenderer meaning for thy sake,
 And all thou loved'st of earth and sky
 Seem sacred to thy memory!

Amesbury, 12th, 3th mo., 1841.

THE LOVER'S REPROOF OF TIME.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

O TIME! I could have wept to mark what thou
 Hadst wrought of ruin on that cherish'd brow!
 Where is the smooth unwrinkled snowy skin
 That hardly prison'd the blue veils within?
 Where the proud arches o'er the sunny orbs
 Whose light the faculties of youth absorbs?
 Where the clustering curls of raven hair
 (Concealing Love's inevitable snare,)
 Through which the burning cheeks in blushes broke,
 Like roses by Hyperion awake?
 And where the lip—ah where! whose first coy kiss
 Informed the heart the ecstasy of bliss;
 Faded for ever! Age hath wither'd all!
 What fascinations slumber 'neath thy pall,
 O devastating Time! O cruel thief!
 Why make the reign of loveliness so brief?
 Why, with its fall, not Memory too depose?
 Memory, the lover's bitterest of foes.
 O would that face had met my gaze no more,

Then could I still the fallacy adore;
 Fondly investing it with ev'ry charm,
 And e'en thy scythe too pitiful to harm—
 But now, its rueful change offends mine eyes,
 And words of welcome die in pain'd surprise;
 While to my bosom comes the sad appeal,
 Can aught, save youth and beauty, break the seal
 That locks the pulses where the passions rest,
 To bid them thrill tumultuously the breast;
 Wildest enthusiast but once can know
 That dream, (the only dream exempt from woe,)
 Decking the earth with Paradisean flows—
 Stealing the languor from grief's shackled hours,
 Speeding on wings of hope each ling'ring thought,
 Lending the soul alone those fancy-fraught,
 And bidding it forestal one gleam of bliss
 From Heaven's joys to light a world like this,
 The dream of boyhood love, the purest, best,
 Sent from the Godhead to the human breast!

THE AGED.

BY MRS. ABDY.

Oh! oft the minstrel's lay describes, with warm and fervent truth,
 The lovely days of childhood, and the blushing spring of youth;
 It dwells upon the season of life's sweet and sunny prime,
 But seldom does it chronicle its dark and winter time.

Yet ever on the aged with deep reverence I look,
 Their inmost thoughts I liken to a wise and wondrous book,
 Enriched with lavish histories of scenes and times of yore,
 That never can be given to the eye of mortal more.

We, in the summer-glow of health, may joyously expect
 To pass along the ways of life by chance and change unchecked;
 But while we trace our future course, and future knowledge crave,
 A year, a day, an hour, alas! may lay us in the grave.

But they already have enjoyed the brief and fleeting span
 By Providence allotted as the common life of man;
 And all the wisdom time imparts to benefit our race,
 Hath in their full-fraught minds secured a certain dwelling-place.

We oft retrace our early youth, and sorrowfully cast
 Reflections on our follies in the season that is past;
 May not the aged in their turn reflect and reason thus:
 May they not mourn the follies that they still decry in us?

Oh! why should we despise them then, and wilfully forego
 The treasures of experience they would readily bestow?
 Even as the meek and docile child receives our counsel sage,
 So ought we humbly to regard the warning voice of age.

They ever should be viewed by us with love and awe, they stand
 On the threshold of another world, a mystic spirit-land,
 They should be cherished and revered as tenants of the sod,
 Soon to receive their summons to the mansion of their God.

Let us prize them as his hostages, held precious in our sight,
 As receiving signal favor from the Lord of power and might;
 Man may bestow the goods of wealth, of honor, rank, and praise,
 But God alone can give to us the boon of lengthened days.



REV. JOHN NEWLAND MAFFIT.

A SERMON,

DELIVERED IN BROMFIELD STREET CHURCH, ON THE EVENING OF WEDNESDAY, THE 25th AUGUST.

BY REV. J. N. MAFFITT,

Professor of Elocution and Belles Lettres, St. Charles College, Mo.

PSALM 8th chapter, 3rd verse.—When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou has ordained;

My text is beautiful in simplicity, and sublime in beauty. The moral grandeur with which it is invested, places me in a similar dilemma with that of the Artist who attempted to paint the general judgment. The subject was too sublime, and his mind alone could grasp it. His Art had no power to embody on canvass the beautiful ideal of his glorious conceptions; and when he had finished his picture, it was not in keeping with his subject. It lowered and debased it. So must I lament my inability to give you the breathings of my soul. In raising my mind up to the subject, I have to reach an elevation that surmounts the earth, and brings me on a level with the throne of the invisible. In attempting this upward flight I need both your sympathies and prayers.

My object, I trust, is to do you good, feeling convinced, if I can accomplish this, the only legitimate object of the preacher of the Gospel, I shall promote his glory, before whom the Angels bow in rapture and praise—before whose awful majesty the earth trembles, but in whose heavenly smiles, the poor, the wretched, the friendless and forsaken of this earth, find joy and peace and love unutterable.

In contemplating the material universe in its infinite variety, its wonderful proportions, its accurate arrangements; the perfections of the Divine Author rise up before the mind's eye in all their grandeur, power and beauty. But when we mark the adaptation of each part of the great whole to its place in the scale, whether animate or inanimate; with the care which an all wise God bestows upon the least as well as the greatest of his works—from the worm that hides its head in the dust to the proud eagle that soars into the heavens—from the meanest insect to man the image of his Maker; we are compelled to acknowledge the goodness of our heavenly Father, who is thus mindful of the child of his adoption and love.

All this may bring conviction to a christian's heart, but to the sceptic or the savage, all is but doubt, speculation and mystery. For instance, contemplate the beauty, glory and perfection of the unnumbered systems of worlds that spread out their palaces of light and grandeur through the vast fields of space and observation—and while you are astonished at the magnificence and splendors of the scene that stretches away into the fathomless depths of immensity; let your thoughts for a moment turn upon the great Architect, and what must be your mighty conceptions of Him!—then turn your eyes upon man, contemplate his insignificance, his weakness, his mortality, and you will not wonder at the words of the psalmist:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou has ordained; what

is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou regardest him.

For though the mind may, from the contemplation of nature and God, form some correct ideas of his goodness to his poor dependent creation, yet, without revelation they would be mingled with perplexity and doubt, and end but in conjecture, or at best a dark and dreary system or systems baseless as the fabric of a vision, and cold as the snows of Lapland. Aided by Revelation, which like the apex of a lofty mountain lifts its head above the clouds and penetrates where all is clear and bright, the whole subject becomes illuminated. So will the minds of the ignorant and perplexed, puzzled with the ways of God to man, become enlightened—aided by that book which contains the teachings of our heavenly Father, they will penetrate the mists of human doubt and enter into the fullness of that light which will enable them to see, understand, and worship in praise and thankfulness.

My object is, *first*, to show you that God is deeply interested in man—that he is mindful of him and visits him; and *secondly*, to give you the reasons for such extraordinary love and care on the part of a Being so infinitely his Superior. Here it may be well to remark, that I am shackled by no stereotyped mode of preaching. I enter not the pulpit prepared with ready made discourses, cut and dry beforehand. What I say comes fresh from my heart. I have one governing motive by which I hope I shall always be controlled—an ardent desire to glorify God and win souls from the error of their ways.

My theme is one of thrilling interest—it occupied the meditations of the wisest of the ancients, and must ever claim the attention of the great and good to the latest generations of time. Does God, the infinite, the uncreated first cause of all things, regard man with a parent's tender care? is he indeed mindful of him? and does he visit him in his low estate? These are questions of deep importance, and upon which there is a great diversity of opinion among the religionists of the day.

One class go on the broad principle, that, as God made mind and matter, he invested them with certain laws, which are to be their only guides—one takes mind, another matter—the latter become animals lying prone along the earth, eating dust, and breathing the foetid air of the marshy fens—the former, intellectual abstractions, and are borne on the air like a balloon, without ballast, unprotected from its fires and snows, its tempests and its calms. Others again travel in a different direction,—one class believing God to be all goodness and mercy and love, and that punishment does not form any part of his moral government—while

the others are for making God and his government and his laws a terror not only to evil doers, but to the pious Christian also, rendering him unhappy in his religion and morose and sour in his associations with his friends, his brethren and the world.

Some launch their bark on the wild and dark waters, resigning themselves to chance, and blindly hoping that the Great Pilot will lead them to a secure haven, without exertion of their own. Others embark, confident of their own skill and despising all other aid steer boldly forth, but when the tempest comes will those landsmen know how to guide the helm or trim the sails, and save their craft from wreck on the rocks of presumption? Then have we the delicate fresh water sailor, who in his richly ornamented yacht thinks not of the painted sepulchre, or, that insel may hide from the eye a rotten plank, he steps with pride on board his frail but gaudy boat and commits himself with maniac confidence to the perils of the mighty deep.

How important to steer clear of all these, and to keep in the good old paths! There is one method which I would suggest, not because it is my own, but on account of its safety and truthfulness. I am governed by three great lights—the first is, the Bible; the second, nature; and the third, the human heart. Some there are, who study the Bible and nothing else; they go round and round, like the horse in the mill, the same circumscribed circle of travel—and conceive all beyond unhallowed ground. The Bible is my sun, and its attendant satellites, nature and the human heart, and the glorious beams reflected from their centre open up all the treasures of divine wisdom and truth, shedding upon the mind that mellow and harmonious light which guides to life eternal.

Directed by this galaxy we cannot err—all things around us become subservient to the purposes for which they were created. Every thing has a tongue, a voice for God, while the eloquence of all living and beautiful objects, fills the soul with gratitude and praise.

Is not this earth, and the sun and the moon and the stars full of his goodness? Were they not fitted up to display his power and to manifest his love? Was not the home of man while he sojourns below, prepared for his comfort and happiness? Does not God lay the material universe under contribution to supply his wants, and minister to his pleasure? Is not every thing in the vegetable, animal and mineral kingdoms, with all the grand laboratories of nature subservient to his will? Eliciting the finer susceptibilities of his soul, and calling forth the homage of his heart? Are there not beauty and poetry in the sunshine and the rainbow, the flowers and the trees, the river and the streams, the plains and the mountains, the night and the day? And what is the philosophy which they teach, the theme of their most ravishing songs? Is it not love, unmeasured, undounded and free?

And shall we narrow down our conceptions of the divine regards, by looking only at a part of the vast machinery of nature, or by confining our views to but one

theatre of his goodness? No: the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.

The cold blooded and prosy christians who fear to admire the works of His hands lest they should rob him of the glory which is his due, and who cannot see beauty on the earth or in the heavens, should be reminded that their religion would be improved by cultivating a taste for the beautiful and the sublime in nature. They should not be forgetful that earth's altars are redolent of the fires and incense of pure devotion—that they are the stepping stones upon which the soul may reverently ascend into the pure sky of gospel holiness, to bask in the light of the ineffable majesty!

Guided still by Revelation, we see everything around us adapted to some useful and benevolent purpose. Even that which would seem at first view deleterious, or at least useless, on a closer examination, turns out frequently to be the reverse, and fills the mind with delight and pleasure.

The form of the earth, its inequalities of surface, the lofty mountains, the tiny hill, the extended plain, the lovely vale, the yawning cavern, the magnificent river, the roaring cataract, the gentle rivulet, the gloomy forest, the green carpet spread out every where, with its garniture of flowers and gorgeous shrubbery, with the glorious canopy that lifts its broad dome above the clouds, richly studded with the eyes of heaven, are all speaking memorials of his love, and when examined and classified display the goodness and benevolence of their great Author.

Oh, how I love the voices and beauties of nature! The colors of the rainbow, the tints of the rose, the gold on the wing of the butterfly, the streaks on the Zebra, the down on the peach, the loud organ of the winds of heaven, and the Zephyr's kiss, are full of beauty and harmony. And when I enquire whose are all these? what hand created them? who tuned those instruments of sound? a sweet voice comes down from heaven, and answers me. My Father has done it all!

What a theme! I cannot convey to you my feelings—I am to show you that God is mindful of man. I have proved it from a contemplation of nature. I will now prove it from man.

Is he not the object of God's special love? Contemplate his complex nature, his wonderful adaptation to his place in the scale of being, filling up a space that hath no bounds, and telling with the power of an earthquake, upon the world around him, upon the present and the future! How wonderful his structure! How amazing his powers! How magnificent, and complicated, and sublime, the achievements of his right arm and the creations of his intellect!

Man so richly and so variously endowed, excites the astonishment of angels, and is indeed the beloved of God. It must be so. He who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, who feeds the young ravens when they cry, cannot be unmindful of his rational intelligences, in whose creation he has bestowed a high degree of

labor, and to whom he has imparted the knowledge of his will and the way of salvation.

The infant, who like an opening flower extends its petals to its mother's heart, is the object of his care. He follows man through the slippery paths of youth and down the descent of years, even to old age, and never forsakes him to the last moments of expiring nature.

Here we should bow down and be grateful, and acknowledge, that to us the love of God passeth all understanding.

But He visits man also. He vouchsafes his presence to cheer and animate us in this valley of miseries. Of this we have splendid proof in the written and revealed word. The Bible is full of this cheering doctrine. God is never absent from his creatures or his works. But this does not satisfy me. I want a nearer manifestation of the Divine Presence—a more palpable exhibition of his person—a closer companionship. He has shown his face amongst us—He is now present in the assemblies of his Saints. I say it with reverence. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not account for the manner of his appearance, or the mysterious shapes which he has assumed. I take a Scriptural view—and adhere to both the spirit and the letter. Are we not informed in the inspired volume, that God conversed with Abraham face to face, and with Moses in like manner—that he spoke with the latter out of the burning bush and from the top of Horeb! Did he not appear to Solomon and to the priests in the temple, and to the prophets and to his people Israel, on many important occasions?

Did he not in the fullness of time appear in Jerusalem in the form of a servant, veiling the Godhead in flesh, and as a man did he not sojourn on the earth, working miracles and doing many wonders, till on the cross he accomplished the redemption of the world!—and when he ascended up on high did he not send forth the Holy Spirit into the world, to convince the world of sin and righteousness and of a judgment to come, and will he not remain among men till the final consummation of all things, when the Lord Jesus shall come again in the clouds of heaven to judge the quick and the dead!

It is not irrational, nor impious, for man to look for all this, or to suppose it possible with God to make himself understood by man. Cannot man communicate his thoughts to the dumb animals, and will they not do his bidding!—and does not the possession of mind in the one case and the want of it in the other form almost as great a barrier between them, as that which exists between God and man! The distance between God and man is not so great in this sense, for mind is a connecting link between them, though in another sense it is infinite. But is it impossible with God to lessen that distance? Can he not by some wonderful interposition of his boundless love bring man up to himself, and so raise the fallen and restore the ruined, that he may again have fellowship with his Maker and walk

in the light of his countenance? He most certainly can. And has he done it? He has. Although we may say to the earth, thou art our mother; and to the worms ye are our brothers and sisters; yet we can look up into heaven and claim relationship to God, not in a common sense only, but in a natural and spiritual one. Jesus Christ is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, and through him we have access to the Father, and rejoice in his presence and glory.

Glory to God! I love the doctrine—it breathes the poetry of faith and holiness. In view of it, I feel like the little boy, who, amid the darkness and horrors of the storm, while the helpless and unmanageable bark dashed reckless o'er the coral beds of the ocean, continued to play thoughtlessly along the deck, and with laughing eye and careless mien, marked each movement of the cloud capped billows, and on being asked by a gentleman if he feared not the storm, replied, No. Are you not alarmed at the raging of the tempest? again asked the gentleman. No, replied the child, my father is at the helm. And may not every christian say, 'My father is at the helm!'

If I looked around with an earthly eye, I should say that God would not interest himself about worms of earth that will pass away like the grass, and leave no trace behind. Yet this very dependence and mortality call forth divine sympathies. That man should excite the interest of heaven is both reasonable and natural. He is a sinner and a sufferer, and although fallen and degraded, he is of noble origin and immortal. Were God to interest himself only for the angels that have not sinned, his character would not stand before us as it now does. But although we have destroyed ourselves and broken the Divine law, he has not left us in despair.

He has laid help on one who is mighty to save and strong to deliver, and we are assured, that he will never leave us nor forsake us. Were we not buoyed up with this hope, what would become of the bereaved, the disconsolate, the unhappy, the orphan, the fatherless, the poor frail children of sin and misery! Oh, since first I knew this city, twenty years ago, how many little cherubs that formed the joy and pride of the domestic circle have gone down into the cold grave! Ah, the worm has fed on their damask cheeks, and their laughing diamond eyes are dimmed in death.—The Fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?

Were we left in the hours of despondency and pain, to lean upon the arm of flesh alone, how miserable would be our condition! What would fill up the dreary void of the heart, broken off from the associations of home, of love and friendship, and rent and torn with ten thousand conflicting pangs and distracting thoughts! My subject answers all these questions, meets me at every point, and affords me that consolation and hope which earth cannot give, which friends and kindred, the dearest and fondest, have no power to impart. To illustrate my doctrine, I will relate an incident that oc-

curred in New Hampshire many years since. I saw the mother of a large family apart from her little brood, bending over the couch of a sickly and deformed child, to whose most trifling wishes her whole attention was given. Her other children were unnoticed, as they played in the sunshine while all her moments were devoted to that unsightly being who could not live to reward her with even a return of affection. In an instant a beautiful sentiment rushed upon my mind. As that mother acts to her poor miserable babe so does God act towards man, the deformed and sickly offspring of pain and sorrow.

He bends from his throne, though surrounded by countless myriads of cherubim and seraphim, angels and arch-angels, and while their songs fill all heaven with joy and rapture, he gives his ear to the moanings of the sorrowing ones of earth—the sighings of the prisoner and the mourners in Zion go up to his throne on the wings of his love, and are answered in the still small voice that make the heart glad and the face to shine. The angels are astonished at this condescension of Jehovah God to beings so far beneath him—they cannot comprehend it—they see him lavishing his choicest gifts on those whose home is the earth, whose resting place is the grave, and they gaze and wonder and admire. Hallelujah! Oh, had I Gabriel's gift of song, I would sing in the loftiest strains, the praises of my God, and the theme should be his unbounded, unmeasured love to man!

Another beautiful feature of my subject rises before my eyes. It is heaven to my soul to reflect upon it.—It is not the wealthy, nor the great, nor the honorable on whom God lavishes his special regards. Indeed, they need it not compared to those on whom fortune has not showered her best gifts. To the former, the religion of Jesus Christ is not such a treasure as it is to the latter. To the poor wretched broken-hearted wanderers of earth without a shelter or a home, who long to take their departure from these low grounds, it is a heaven of beauty.

It is indeed balm to those who have drunk of the wormwood and the gall, and whose hearts have been scathed like the lofty pine, and around whose tottering

forms, early friends and fondly prized and loved have fallen. It is to these, that the Religion of our Lord Jesus Christ appears in all its glory. Oh, it wafts their happy spirits on the breath of angels to that sweet land of flowers, whose fragrance and beauty never die; that realm of bliss, where death's raven wing can never sully the calm clear skies—that paradise of blessedness and peace and joy, where all the friends of Jesus severed below shall meet again, to be united forever.

And is not Jesus always present to bind up the broken hearted, to comfort the afflicted, to heal the wounds that sin hath made, and to minister to the wants of all—Jesus is not dead—He is the resurrection and the life, and He will live forevermore. He is here in our midst. He stretcheth forth his hands to embrace you—He invit^e you to his bosom, to participate with him in those pleasures that are at God's right hand.

Oh let his love your hearts constrain,
Nor suffer Christ to die in vain.

Before we close let the subject sink into your hearts as bars of iron sink into deep waters. Let the love of God win your love in return.

Oh let us reflect that our fate will soon be finally fixed, either in heaven or in hell. That now is the accepted time, that now is the day of salvation. Who will hesitate to come to Jesus. Behold he stands at the threshold of your heart, knocking for entrance. He offers you his love, he points you to his Father, and promises you glory and happiness forever, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Could I but for a moment, draw aside the curtains of the invisible world, I would point out to you the beauties of Heaven—I would show you the friends that have gone before, who died in the faith and are now among the harpers, swelling the high anthems of Heaven.

There they are—see them through the distant vistas that break over the everlasting hills, they beckon you away, they call you home, they bend over you from the rosy clouds, and with glances of love and affection, bid you come to their sunny abodes, where the sorrows of earth are unknown—

Where hope never withers and where love never dies.

A DREAM OF CHILDHOOD.

I had an hour's dreaming,
When busy Fancy's train
Brought in its pleasant seeming,
The happy past again!
I roam'd accustom'd places,
A little child once more;
I saw again lov'd faces
All smiling as of yore!
I saw beside the wild-wood
Our petty rustic cot,
Just as it stood in childhood,
That fairy haunted spot!
I saw my father sitting
When sultry day was o'er;
My aged mother knitting
Her stockings at the door.

Those came my gentle sister—
Alas! long since iurned—
Yet there she was—I kiss'd her,
I felt her kiss return'd!
I heard my brother's prattle,
His merry laugh once more;
Although he died in battle,
Long since on some far shore!
My eyes wept on till aching
With such excess of joy;
Alas! that truth and waking
The charm should all destroy.
Strange freak of fancy's showing—
I was in that brief span,
A child with light locks flowing,
I woke a grey old man.

[From the Gift for 1942.]

ELEONORA,---A FABLE.

BY EDGAR A. POE.

I am come of a race noted for vigor of fancy and ardor of passion. Pyrrus is my name. Men have called me mad; but the question is not yet settled whether madness be or be not the loftier intelligence—whether much that is glorious—whether all that is profound—do not spring from disease of thought, from moods of mind exalted at the expense of the general intellect. They who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape the dreamers by night. In their gray visions they obtain glimpses of eternity, and thrill, in awaking, to find that they have been upon the verge of the great secret. In snatches they learn something of the wisdom which is of good, and more of that mere knowledge which is of evil. They penetrate, however rudderless or compassless, into the vast ocean of the 'light ineffable,' and, again, like the adventurers of the Nubian geographer, '*agressi sunt mare tenebrarum, quid in eo esset exploraturi.*'

We will say then that I am mad. I grant, at least, that there are two distinct conditions of my mental existence—the condition of a lucid reason, not to be disputed, and belonging to the memory of events forming the first epoch of my life; and a condition of shadow and doubt, appertaining to the present, and to the recollection of what constitutes the second great era of my being. Therefore, what I shall tell of the earlier period, believe; and to what I may relate of the later time, give only such credit as may seem due: or doubt it altogether; or, if doubt it ye dare not, then play unto its riddle the Sphinx.

She whom I loved in youth, and of whom I now pen calmly and distinctly these remembrances, was the sole daughter of the only sister of my mother long departed. Eleonora was the name of my cousin. We had always dwelt together, beneath a tropical sun, in the 'Valley of Many-Colored Grass.' No unguided footstep ever came upon that vale; for it lay singularly far away up among a range of giant hills that hung beetling around about it, shutting out the sunlight from its sweet recesses. No path was trodden in its vicinity; and to reach our happy home there was need of putting back with force the foliage of many thousands of forest trees, and of crushing to death the glories of many millions of fragrant flowers. Thus it was that we lived all alone, knowing nothing of the world without the valley—I, and my cousin, and her mother.

From the dim regions beyond the mountains at the upper end of our encircled domain there crept out a narrow and deep river, brighter than all save Eleonora's eyes; and, winding stealthily about in mazy courses, it passed away at length through a shadowy gorge among hills still dimmer than those from which it had issued. We called it the 'River of Silence;' for there

seemed to be a hushing influence in its flow.—No murmur arose from its bed, and so gently it wandered along that the pearly pebbles upon which we loved to gaze, far down within its bosom, stirred not at all, but lay in a motionless content, each in its own old station, shining on gloriously for ever.

And the margin of the river, and of the many dazzling rivulets that glided through devious ways into its channel, and the spaces that extended from the brinks away down into the depths of the streams, until they reached the bed of pebbles at the bottom—these spots, not less than the whole surface of the valley, from the river to the mountains that girdled it in, were carpeted all by a soft green grass, thick, short, perfectly even, and vanilla perfumed, but so besprinkled throughout with the yellow buttercup, the white daisy, the purple violet, and the ruby-red asphodel, that its exceeding beauty spoke to our hearts in loud tones of the love and of the glory of God.

And here and there, in groves about this grass, like wildernesses of dreams, sprang up fantastic trees, whose tall slender stems stood not upright, but slanted gracefully toward the light that peered at noonday into the centre of the valley. Their bark was speckled with the vivid alternate splendors of ebony and silver, and was smoother than all save the cheeks of Eleonora—so that but for the brilliant green of the huge leaves that spread from their summits in long tremulous lines, dallying with the zephyrs, one might have fancied them giant serpents of Syria, doing homage to their sovereign, the sun.

Hand in hand about this valley, for fifteen years, roamed I with Eleonora, before love entered within our hearts. It was one evening at the close of the third lustrum of her life, and of the fourth of my own, that we sat, locked in each other's embrace, beneath the serpent-like trees, and looked down within the waters of the River of Silence at our images therein. We spoke no words during the rest of that sweet day; and our words upon the morrow were tremulous and few.

We had drawn the god Eros from that wave; and now we felt that he had enkindled within us the fiery souls of our forefathers. The passions which had for centuries distinguished our race came thronging with the fancies for which they had been equally noted, and together breathed a delicious bliss over the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass. A change fell upon all things. Strange brilliant flowers, star-shaped, burst out upon the trees, where no flowers had been known before. The tints of the green carpet deepened, and when, one by one, the white daises shrank away, there sprang up in place of them ten by ten of the ruby-red asphodel. And life arose in our paths; for the tall flamingo, hitherto unseen, with all gay,

glowing birds, flaunted his scarlet plumage before us; and golden and silver fish haunted the river, out of the bosom of which issued, little by little, a murmur that swelled at length into a lulling melody more divine than that of the harp of *Æolus*, sweeter than all save the voice of *Eleonora*. And now, too, a vast and voluminous cloud, which we had long watched in the regions of *Hesper*, floated out thence all gorgeous in crimson and gold, and settling in peace above us, sank day by day lower and lower, until its edges rested upon the tops of the mountains, turning all their dimness into magnificence, and shutting us up, as if for ever, within a magic prison house of grandeur and of glory.

The loveliness of *Eleonora* was that of the seraphim—and here, as in all things referring to this epoch, my memory is vividly distinct. In stature she was tall, and slender even to fragility; the exceeding delicacy of her frame, as well as of the hues of her cheek, speaking painfully of the feeble tenure by which she held existence. The lilies of the valley were not more fair. With the nose, lips, and chin of the Greek *Venus*, she had the majestic forehead, the naturally-ravine auburn hair, and the large luminous eyes of her kindred. Her beauty, nevertheless, was of that nature which leads the heart to woder not less than to love. The grace of her motion was surely ethereal. Her fantastic step left no impress upon the asphodel—and I could not but dream as I gazed, enrapt, upon her alternate moods of melaacholy and of mirth, that two separate souls were enshrined within her. So radical were her changes of countenance, that at one instant I fancied her possessed by some spirit of smiles, at another by some demon of tears.

She was a maiden artless and innocent as the brief life she had led among the flowers. No guile disguised the fervor of love which animated her heart—and she examined with me its inmost recesses, as we walked together in the Valley of the Many Colored Grass, and discoursed of the mighty changes which had lately taken place. At length, having spoken, one day, in tears, of the last sad change which must befall humanity, she thenceforward dwelt only upon this one sorrowful theme, interweaving it into all our converse—as in the songs of the Bard of *Shiraz* the same images are found occurring again and again in every impressive variation of phrase.

She had seen that the finger of death was upon her bosom—that, like the ephemera, she had been made perfect in loveliness only to die; but the terrors of the grave, to her, lay solely in a consideration which she revealed to me, one still evening at twilight, by the banks of the River of Silence. She grieved to think that, having entombed her in the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass, I would quit for ever its happy recesses, transferring the love which was now so passionately her own to some maiden of the outer and every day world.

And then and there I threw myself hurriedly at the feet of *Eleonora*, and offered up a vow to herself and to Heaven that I would never bind

myself in marriage to any daughter of earth—that I would in no manner prove recreant to her dear memory, or to the memory of the devout affection with which she had blessed me. And I called the Mighty Ruler of the universe to witness the pious solemnity of my vow. And the curse which I invoked of him, and of her, a saint in *Elysium*, should I prove traitorous to that promise, involved a penalty the exceeding great horror of which will not permit me to make record of it here. And the bright eyes of *Eleonora* grew brighter at my words; and she sighed as if a deadly burden had been taken from her breast; and she trembled and very bitterly wept; but she made acceptance of the vow—for what was she but a child? and it made easy to her the bed of her death. And she said to me, not many days afterwards, tranquilly dying, that because of what I had done for the comfort of her spirit, she would watch over me in that spirit when departed, and, if so it were permitted her, return to me visibly in the watches of the night; but if this thing were indeed beyond the power of the souls in *Paradise*, that she would at least give me frequent indications of her presence, sighing upon me in the evening winds, or filling the air which I breathed with perfume from the censurers of the angels.—And with these words upon her lips she yielded up her innocent life, putting end to the first epoch of my own.

Thus far I have faithfully said; but, as I pass the barrier in time's path formed by the death of my beloved, and proceeded in the second era of my existence, I feel that a vague shadow gathers over my brain, and I mistrust the perfect sanity of the record. But let me on. Years dragged themselves along heavily, and still, with the aged mother of *Eleonora*, I dwelled within the Valley of the Many Colored Grass. A second change had come upon all things. The star-shaped flowers shrank into the stems of the trees, and appeared no more. The tints of the green carpet faded, and one by one the ruby-red asphodels withered away, and there sprang up in place of them, ten by ten, dark eye-like violets that quivered uneasily. And life departed from our paths; for the tall flamingo flaunted no longer his scarlet plumage before us, but flew sadly from the vale into the hills, with all the gay, glowing birds that had arrived in his company. And the golden and silver fish swam down through the gorge at the lower end of our domain, and bedecked the sweet river never again. And the lulling melody that had been softer than the wind-harp of *Æolus*, and more divine than all save the voice of *Eleonora*—it died, little by little, away, in murmurs growing lower and lower, until the stream returned at length utterly into the solemnity of its original silence. And then, lastly, the voluminous cloud uprose, and abandoning the tops of the mountains to the dimness of old, fell back into the regions of *Hesper*, and took away all its manifold golden and gorgeous glories from the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass.

Yet the promises of *Eleonora* were not forgotten; for I heard the sounds of the swinging of

the censers of the angels; and streams of a holy perfume floated ever and ever about the valley; and at lone hours, when my heart beat heavily, the winds that bathed my brow came unto me laden with soft sighs; and indistinct murmurs filled often the night air; and once—oh, but once only—I was awakened from a slumber like unto the slumber of death, by the pressing of spiritual lips upon my own.

But the void within my heart refused even thus to be filled. I longed—I madly pined for the love which had before filled it to overflowing. At length the valley pained me through for memories of Eleonora, and left it for ever its the vanities and the turbulent triumphs of the world.

I found myself within a strange Eastern city, where all things might have served to blot from recollection the sweet dreams I had dreamed so long in the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass. The pomps and pageantries of a stately court, and the mad clangor of arms, and the radiant loveliness of woman, bewildered and intoxicated my brain. But as yet my soul had proved true to her vows, and the indications of the presence of Eleonora were still given me in the silent hours of the night. Suddenly these manifestations ceased, and the world grew dark before my eyes, and I stood aghast at the burning thoughts which possessed, at the terrible temptations which beset me—for there came, from some far distant and unknown land, into the gay court of the king I served, a fair-haired and slender maiden, to whose beauty my whole recreant

heart yielded at once—at whose footstool I bowed down, without a struggle, in the most ardent, in the most abject worship of love.

What, indeed, was the passion I had once felt for the young girl of the Valley, in comparison with the madness, and the glow, and the fervor, and the spirit-stirring ecstasy of adoration with which I poured out my soul in tears at the feet of the lady Ermengarde? Oh, bright was the lady Ermengarde! I looked down into the blue depths of her meaning eyes, and I thought only of them, and of her. Oh, lovely was the lady Ermengarde! and in that knowledge I had room for none other. Oh, glorious was the wavy flow of her auburn tresses! and I clasped them in a transport of joy to my bosom. And I found rapture in the fantastic grace of her step—and there was a wild delirium in the love I bore her when I started to see upon her countenance the radical transition from tears to smiles that I had wondered at in the long-lost Eleonora. I forgot—I despised the horrors of the curse I had so blindly invoked, and I wedded the lady Ermengarde.

I wedded, nor dreaded the curse I had invoked, and its bitterness was not visited upon me.—And in the silence of the night there came once again through my lattice the soft sighs which had forsaken me, and they modelled themselves into sweet voice, saying—'Sleep in peace; for the spirit of Love reigneth and ruleth; and in taking to thy passionate heart her who is Ermengarde, thou art absolved, for reasons which shall be made known to thee in Heaven, of thy vows unto Eleonora.'

THE LAMPLIGHTER'S STORY.

BY CHARLES DICKENS, (BOZ.)

'If you talk of Murphy and Francis Moore, gentlemen,' said the lamplighter who was in the chair, 'I mean to say that neither of 'em ever had any more to do with the stars than Tom G.ig had.'

'And what had *he* to do with 'em?' asked the lamplighter who officiated as vice.

'Nothing at all,' replied the other; 'just exactly nothing at all.'

'Do you mean to say don't believe in Murphy, then?' demanded the lamplighter who had opened the discussion.

'I mean to say that I believe in Tom Grig,' replied the chairman. 'Whether I believe in Murphy, or not, is a matter between me and my conscience; or whether Murphy believes in himself, or not, is a matter between him and his conscience. Gentlemen, I drink your healths.'

The lamplighter who did the company this honor, was seated in the chimney corner of a certain tavern, which has been, time out of mind the Lamplighters' House of Call. He sat in the midst of a circle of lamplighters, and was the cacique or chief of the tribe.

If any of our readers have had the good fortune to behold a lamplighter's funeral, they will not be surprised to learn that lamplighters are a strange and primitive people; that they rigidly adhere to old ceremonies and customs which have been handed down among them from father to son since the first public lamp was lighted out of doors; that they intermarry, and betroth their children in infancy; that they enter into no plots or conspiracies (for whoever heard of a traitorous lamplighter?); that they commit no crimes against the laws of their country (there being no instance of a murderous or burglarious lamplighter); that they are, in short, notwithstanding their apparently volatile and restless character, a highly moral reflective people; having among themselves as many traditional observances as the Jews, and being, as a body, if not as old as the hills, at least as old as the streets. It is an article of their creed that the first faint glimmering of true civilization shone in the first street light maintained at the public expense. They trace their existence and high position in the public esteem, in a direct line to the heathen mythology; and hold that

the history of Prometheus himself is but a pleasant fable, whereof the true hero is a lamplighter.

'Gentlemen,' said the lamplighter in the chair, 'I drink your healths.'

'And perhaps, Sir,' said the vice, holding up his glass, and rising a little way off his seat and sitting down again, in token that he recognised and returned the compliment, 'perhaps you will add to that condescension by telling us who Tom Grig was, and how he came to be connected in your mind with Francis Moore, Physician.'

'Hear, hear, hear!' cried the lamplighters generally.

'Tom Grig, gentlemen,' said the chairman, 'was one of us; and it happened to him as it don't often happen to a public character in our line, that he had his what-you-may-call-it cast.'

'His head?' said the vice.

'No,' replied the chairman, 'not his head.'

'His face perhaps?' said the vice.

'No, not his face.'

'His legs?'

'No, not his legs.'

Nor yet his arms, nor his hands, nor his feet, nor his chest, all of which were severally suggested.

'His nativity, perhaps?'

'That's it,' said the chairman, awakening from his thoughtful attitude at the suggestion.

'His nativity. That's what Tom had cast, gentlemen.'

'In plaster?' asked the vice.

'I don't rightly know how it's done,' returned the chairman, 'but I suppose it was.'

And there he stopped as if that were all he had to say; whereupon there arose a murmur among the company, which at length resolved itself into a request, conveyed through the vice, that he would go on. This being exactly what the chairman wanted, he mused for a little time, performed that agreeable ceremony which is popularly termed wetting one's whistle, and went on thus:

'Tom Grig, gentlemen, was, as I have said, one of us; and I may go further, and say he was an ornament to us, and such a one as only the good old times of oil and cotton could have produced. Tom's family, gentlemen, were all lamplighters.'

'Not the ladies, I hope?' asked the vice.

'They had talents enough for it, Sir,' rejoined the chairman, 'and would have been, but for the prejudices of society. Let women have their rights, Sir, and the females of Tom's family would have been every one of 'em in office. But that emancipation hasn't come yet, and hadn't then, and consequently they confined themselves to the bosoms of their families, cooked the dinners, mended the clothes, minded the children, comforted their husbands, and attended to the housekeeping generally. It's a hard thing upon the women, gentlemen, that they are limited to such a sphere of action as this; very hard.'

'I happen to know all' about Tom, gentlemen, from the circumstance of his uncle by the mother's side, having been my particular friend.—

His (that's Tom's uncle's) fate was a melancholy one. Gas was the death of him. When it was first talked of, he laughed. He wasn't angry; he laughed at the credulity of human nature. 'They might as well talk,' he says, 'of lying on an everlasting succession of glow-worms;' and then he laughed again, partly at his joke, and partly at poor humanity.

'In course of time, however, the thing got ground, the experiment was made, and they lighted up Pali Mall. Tom's uncle went to see it. I've heard that he fell off his ladder fourteen times that night from weakness, and that he would certainly have gone on falling till he killed himself, if his last tumble hadn't been into a wheelbarrow which was going his way, and humanely took him home. 'I foresee in this,' says Tom's uncle faintly, and taking to his bed as he spoke—'I foresee in this,' he says, 'the breaking up of our profession. There's no more going the rounds to trim by daylight, no more dribbling down of the oil on the hats and bonnets of ladies and gentlemen when one feels in spirits. Any low fellow can light a gas-lamp. And it's all up.' In this state of mind, he petitioned the government for—I want a word again, gentlemen—what do you call that which they give to people when it's found out, at last, that they've never been of any use, and have been paid too much for doing nothing?'

'Compensation?' suggested the vice.

'That's it,' said the chairman. 'Compensation. They didn't give it him though, and then he got very fond of his country all at once, and went about saying that gas was a death-blow to his native land, and that it was a plot of the radicals to ruin the country and destroy the oil and cotton trade for ever, and that the whales would go and kill themselves privately, out of sheer spite and vexation at not being caught. At last he got right-down cracked; called his tobacco-pipe a gas-pipe; thought his tears were lamp-oil; and went on with all manner of nonsense of that sort, till one night he hung himself on a lamp-iron in Saint Martin's Lane, and there was an end of him.'

'Tom loved him, gentlemen, but he survived it. He shed a tear over his grave, got very drunk, spoke a funeral oration that night in the watch-house, and was fined five shillings for it, in the morning. Tom was one of 'em. He went that very afternoon on a new beat; as clear in his head, and as free from fever as Father Mathew himself.'

'Tom's new beat, gentlemen, was—I can't exactly say where, for that he'd never tell; but I know it was in a quiet part of town, where there were some queer old houses. I have always had it in my head that it must have been somewhere near Canonbury Tower in Islington, but that's a matter of opinion. Wherever it was, he went upon it, with a bran new ladder, a white hat a brown holland jacket and trowsers, a blue neckerchief, and a sprig of full-blown double wall-flower in his button-hole. Tom was always genteel in his appearance, and I have heard from the best judges, that if he had left

his ladder at home that afternoon; you might have took him for a lord.

'He was always merry, was Tom, and such a singer, that if there was any encouragement for native talent, he'd have been at the opera. He was on his ladder, lighting his first lamp, and singing to himself in a manner more easily to be conceived than described, when he hears the clock strike five, and suddenly sees an old gentleman with a telescope in his hand, throw up a window and look at him very hard.

'Tom didn't know what could be passing in this old gentleman's mind. He thought it likely enough that he might be saying within himself, 'Here's a new lamplighter—a good-looking young fellow—shall I stand something to drink?' Thinking this possible, he keeps quite still, pretending to be very particular about the wick, and looks at the old gentleman sideways, seeming to take no notice of him.

'Gentlemen, he was one of the strangest and most mysterious looking fellows that ever Tom clapped his eyes on. He was dressed all slovenly and untidy, in a great gown of a kind of bed-furniture pattern, with a cap of the same on his head; and a long old flapped waistcoat; with no braces, no strings, very few buttons—in short, with hardly any of those artificial contrivances that hold society together. Tom knew by these signs, and by his not being shaved, and by his not being over-clean, and by a sort of wisdom not quite awake, in his face, that he was a scientific old gentleman. He often told me that if he could have conceived the possibility of the whole Royal Society being boiled down into one man, he should have said the old gentleman's body was that body.

'The old gentleman claps the telescope to his eye, looks all round, sees nobody else in sight, stares at Tom again, and cries out very loud:

'Hal-loa!

'Holloa, Sir,' says Tom from the ladder; and holla again, if you come to that.'

'Here's an extraordinary fulfilment,' says the old gentleman, 'of a prediction of the planets.'

'Is there?' says Tom, 'I'm very glad to hear it.'

'Young man,' says the old gentleman, 'you don't know me.'

'Sir,' says Tom, 'I have not that honor; but I shall be happy to drink your health, notwithstanding.'

'Read,' cries the old gentleman, without taking any notice of this politeness on Tom's part—'I read what's going to happen, in the stars.'

'Tom thanked him for the information and begged to know if any thing particular was going to happen in the stars, in the course, of a week or so; but the old gentleman, correcting him, explained that he read in the stars what was going to happen on dry land, and that he was acquainted with all the celestial bodies.

'I hope they're all well, Sir,' says Tom, 'every body.'

'Hush!' cries the old gentleman. 'I have consulted the book of Fate with rare and wonderful success. I am versed in the great sciences

of astrology and astronomy. In my house here, I have every description of apparatus for observing the course and motion of the planets. Six months ago, I derived from this source, the knowledge that precisely as the clock struck five this afternoon, a stranger would present himself—the destined husband of my young and lovely niece—in reality of illustrious and high descent, but whose birth would be enveloped in uncertainty and mystery. Don't tell me yours isn't,' says the old gentleman, who was in such a hurry to speak that he couldn't get the words out fast enough, 'for I know better.'

'Gentlemen, Tom was so astonished when he heard him say this, that he could hardly keep his footing on the ladder, and found it necessary to hold on by the lamp-post. There was a mystery about his birth. His mother had always admitted it. Tom had never known who was his father, and some people had gone so far as say that even she was in doubt.

'While he was in this state of amazement, the old gentleman leaves the window, bursts out of the house-door, shakes the ladder, and Tom, like a ripe pumpkin, comes sliding down into his arms.

'Let me embrace you,' he says, folding his arms about him, and nearly lighting up his old bed-furniture gown at Tom's link. 'You're a man of noble aspect. Every thing combines to prove the accuracy of my observations. You have had mysterious promptings within you,' he says; 'I know you have had whisperings of greatness, eh?' he says.

'I think I have,' says Tom—Tom was one of those who can persuade themselves to any thing they like—'I have often thought I wasn't the small beer I was taken for.'

'You were right,' cries the old gentleman, hugging him again. 'Come in. My niece awaits us.'

'Is the young lady tolerable good-looking, Sir?' says Tom, hanging fire rather, as he thought of her playing the piano, and knowing French, and being up to all manner of accomplishments.

'She's beautiful!' cries the old gentleman, who was in such a terrible bustle that he was all in a perspiration. 'She has a graceful carriage, an exquisite shape, a sweet voice, a countenance beaming with animation and expression; and the eye,' he says, rubbing his hands, 'of a startled fawn.'

'Tom supposed this might mean, what was called among his circle of acquaintance, 'a game eye;' and, with a view to this defect, inquired quired whether the young lady had any cash.

'She has five thousand pounds,' cries the old gentleman. 'But what of that? what of that? A word in your ear. I'm in search of the philosopher's stone. I have very nearly found it—not quite. It turns every thing to gold; that's its property.'

'Tom naturally thought it must have a deal of property; and said that when the old gentleman did get it, he hoped he'd be careful to keep it in the family.

‘Certainly,’ he says, ‘of course. Five thousand pounds! What’s five thousand pounds to us? What’s five million?’ he says. ‘What’s five thousand million? Money will be nothing to us. We shall never be able to spend it fast enough.’

‘We’ll try what we can do. Sir,’ says Tom. ‘We will,’ says the old gentleman. ‘Your name?’

‘Grig,’ says Tom.

‘The old gentleman embraced him again, very tight; and without speaking another word, dragged him into the house in such an excited manner, that it was as much as Tom could do to take his link and ladder with him, and put them down in the passage.

‘Gentlemen, if Tom hadn’t been always remarkable for his love of truth, I think you would still have believed him when he said that all this was like a dream. There is no better way for a man to find out whether he is really asleep or awake, than calling for something to eat. If he’s in a dream, gentlemen, he’ll find something wanting in the flavor, depend upon it.

‘Tom explained his doubts to the old gentleman, and said that if there was any cold meat in the house, it would ease his mind very much to test himself at once. The old gentleman ordered up a venison pie, a small ham, and a bottle of very old Madeira. At the first mouthful of pie, and the first glass of wine, Tom smacks his lips and cries out, ‘I’m awake—wide awake;’ and to prove that he was so, gentlemen, he made an end of em both.

‘When Tom had finished his meal (which he never spoke of afterwards without tears in his eyes), the old gentleman hugs him again, and says, ‘Noble stranger! let us visit my young and lovely niece.’ Tom, who was a little elevated with the wine, replies, ‘The noble stranger is agreeable!’ At which words the old gentleman took him by the hand, and led him to the parlor; crying as he opened the door, ‘Here is Mr Grig, the favorite of the planets!’

‘I will not attempt a description of female beauty, gentlemen, for every one of us has a model of his own that suits his own taste best. In this parlor that I’m speaking of, there were two young ladies; and if every gentleman present, will imagine two models of his own in their places, and will be kind enough to polish ‘em up to the very highest pitch of perfection, he will then have a faint conception of their uncommon radiance.

‘Besides these two young ladies, there was their waiting-woman, that under any other circumstances Tom would have looked upon as a Venus; and besides her, there was a tall, thin, dismal-faced young gentleman, half man and half boy, dressed in a childish suit of clothes very much too short in the legs and arms; and looking, according to Tom’s comparison, like one of the wax juveniles from a tailor’s door, grown up and run to seed. Now, this youngster stamped his foot upon the ground and looked very fierce at Tom, and Tom look looked fierce at him—for to tell the truth, gentlemen, Tom more than half suspected that when they

entered the room he was kissing one of the young ladies; and for any thing Tom knew, you observe, it might be his young lady—which was not pleasant.

‘Sir,’ says Tom, ‘before we proceed any further, will you have the goodness to inform me who this young Salamander’—Tom called him that for aggravation, you perceive, gentlemen—who this young Salamander may be?’

‘That, Mr. Grigg,’ says the old gentleman, ‘is my little boy. He was christened Galileo Isaac Newton Flamstaad. Don’t mind him. He’s a mere child.’

‘A very fine child, too,’ says Tom—still aggravating, you’ll observe—‘of his age, and as good as fine, I have no doubt. How do you do, my man?’ with which kind and patronising expressions, Tom reached up to pat him on the head, and quoted two lines about little boys, from Doctor Watts’s Hymns, which he had learnt at a Sunday school.

‘It was very easy to see, gentleman, by this youngster’s frowning, and by the waiting-maid’s tossing her head and turning up her nose, and by the young ladies turning their backs and talking together at the other end of the room, that nobody but the old gentleman took very kindly to the noble stranger. Indeed, Tom plainly heard the waiting-woman say of her master, that so far from being able to read the stars as he pretended, she didn’t believe he knew his letters in ‘em, or at best, that he had got further than words in one syllable; but Tom, not minding this (for he was in spirits after the Madeira), looks with an agreeable air towards the young ladies, and, kissing his hand to both, says to the old gentleman, ‘Which is which?’

‘This,’ says the old gentleman, leading out the handsomest, if one of ‘em could possibly be said to be handsomer than the other—‘this is my niece, Miss Fanny Barker.’

‘If you’ll permit me, Miss,’ says Tom, ‘being a noble stranger and a favorite of the planets, I will conduct myself as such.’ With these words he kisses the young lady in a very affable way, turns to the old gentleman, slaps him on the back, and says, ‘When’s it to come off, my buck?’

‘The young lady colored so deep, and her lip trembled so much, gentlemen, that Tom really thought she was going to cry. But she kept her feelings down, and turning to the old gentleman, says,—

‘Dear uncle, though you have the disposal of my hand and fortune, and though you mean well in disposing of ‘em thus, I ask you whether you don’t think this is a mistake? Don’t you think, dear uncle,’ she says, ‘that the stars must be in error? Is it not possible that the comet may have put ‘em out?’

‘The stars,’ says the old gentleman, ‘couldn’t make a mistake if they tried. Emma,’ he says to the other young lady.

‘Yes, papa,’ says she.

‘The same day that makes your cousin Mrs. Grigg, will unite you to the gifted Mooney. No remonstrance—no tears. Now, Mr. Grigg, let me conduct you to that hallowed ground, that

philosophical retreat, where my friend and partner, the gifted Mooney of whom I have just now spoken, is even now pursuing those discoveries which shall enrich us with the precious metal, and make us masters of the world. Come, Mr. Grigg,' says he.

'With all my heart, sir,' replies Tom, 'and luck to the gifted Mooney, say I—not so much on his account as for our own worthy selves!'

With this sentiment, Tom kissed his hand to the ladies again, and followed him out; having the gratification to perceive, as he looked back, that they were all hanging on by the arms and legs of Galileo Isaac Newton Flamstead, to prevent him from following the noble stranger, and tearing him to pieces.

Gentlemen, Tom's father-in-law that was to be, took him by the hand, and having lighted a little lamp, led him across a paved court-yard at the back of the house, into a very large, dark, gloomy room: filled with all manner of bottles, globes, books, telescopes, crocodiles, alligators, and other scientific instruments of every kind. In the centre of this room was a stove or furnace, with what Tom called a pot, but which in my opinion was a crucible, in full boil. In one corner was a sort of ladder leading through the roof; and up this ladder the old gentleman pointed, as he said in a whisper:—

'The observatory. Mr. Mooney is even now watching for the precise time at which we are to come into all the riches of the earth. It will be necessary for he and I, alone in that silent place to east your nativity before the hour arrives.—Put the day and minute of your birth on this piece of paper, and then sir, leave the rest to me.'

'You don't mean to say,' says Tom, doing as he was told and giving him back the paper, 'that I'm to wait here long, do you? It's a precious dismal place.'

'Hush!' says the old gentleman, 'it's hallowed ground. Farewell!'

'Stop a minute, says Tom, 'What a hurry you're in. What's in that large bottle yonder?'

'It's a child with three heads,' says the old gentleman; 'and every thing else in proportion.'

'Why don't you throw him away?' says Tom.

'What do you keep such unpleasant things here for?'

'Throw him away!' cries the old gentleman. 'We use him constantly in astrology. He's a charm.'

'I shouldn't have thought it,' says Tom 'from his appearance. Must you go, I say?'

'The old gentleman makes him no answer, but climbs up the ladder in a greater bustle than ever. Tom looked after his legs till there was nothing of him left, and then sat down to wait; feeling, so he used to say, as comfortable as if he was going to be made a freemason, and they were heating the pokers.

'Tom waited so long, gentlemen, that he began to think it must be getting on for midnight at least, and felt more dismal and lonely than ever he had done in his life. He tried every

means of wiling away the time, but it never had seemed to move so slow. First, he took a nearer view of the child with three heads, and tho't what a comfort it must have been to his parents. Then he looked up a long telescope which was pointed out of the window, but saw nothing particular, in consequence of the stopper being on at the other end. Then he came to a skeleton in a glass case, labelled, 'Skeleton of a gentleman—Prepared by Mr. Mooney,'—which made him hope that Mr. Mooney might not be in the habit of preparing gentlemen that way without their own consent. A hundred times, at least, he looked into the pot where they were boiling the philosopher's stone down to the proper consistency, and wondered whether it was nearly done.

'When it is,' thinks Tom, 'I'll send out for a sixpenn'orth of sprats, and turn 'em into gold fish for the first experiment.'

'Besides which, he made up his mind, gentlemen, to have a country-house and a park; and to plant a bit of it with a double row of gas lamps a mile long, and go out every night with a french-polished mahogany ladder, and two servants in livery behind him, to light 'em for his own pleasure.

'At length and at last, the old gentleman's legs appeared upon the steps leading through the roof, and he came slowly down: bringing along with him, the gifted Mooney. This Mooney, gentlemen, was even more scientific in appearance than his friend; and had, as Tom often declared upon his word and his honor, the dirtiest face we can possibly know of, in this imperfect state of existence.

'Gentlemen, you are all aware that if a scientific man isn't absent in his mind, he's of no good at all. Mr. Mooney, was so absent, that when the old gentleman said to him 'shake hands with Mr. Grigg,' he put out his leg. 'Here's a mind, Mr. Grigg!' cries the old gentleman in a rapture. 'Here's philosophy! Here's rumination! Don't disturb him,' he says, 'for this is amazing!'

'Tom had no desire to disturb him, having nothing particular to say; but he was so uncommonly amazing, that the old gentleman got impatient, and determined to give him an electric shock to bring him to—' for you must know, Mr. Grigg,' he says, 'that we always keep a strongly charged battery, ready for that purpose.' These means being resorted to, gentlemen, the gifted Mooney revived with a loud roar, and he no sooner came to himself, than he and the old gentleman looked at Tom, with compassion, and shed tears abundantly.

'My dear friend,' says the old gentleman to the Gifted, 'prepare him.'

'I say,' cries Tom, falling back, 'none of that, you know. No preparing by Mr. Mooney, if you please.'

'Alas!' replies the old gentleman, 'you don't understand us. My friend, inform him of his fate. I can t.

'The Gifted mustered up his voice, after many efforts, and informed Tom that his nativity had been carefully cast, and he would expire at

exactly thirty-five minutes, twenty-seven seconds, and five-sixths of a second, past nine o'clock, A. M., on that day two months.

'Gentlemen, I leave you to judge what were Tom's feelings at this announcement, on the eve of matrimony and endless riches

'I think,' he says in a trembling way, 'there must be a mistake in the working of that sum. Will you do me the favor to cast it up again?

'There is no mistake,' replies the old gentleman, 'it is confirmed by Francis Moore, Physician. Here is the prediction for tomorrow two months.'

And he showed him the page, where sure enough were these words—'The decease of a great person may be looked for, about this time.'

'Which,' says the old gentleman, 'is clearly you, Mr Grig.'

'Too clearly,' cries Tom, sinking into a chair, and giving one hand to the old gentleman, and one to the Gifted. 'The orb of day has set on Thomas Grig forever!'

'At this affecting remark, the Gifted shed tears again, and the other two mingled their tears with his, in a kind—If I may use the expression—of Mooney and Co.'s entire. But the old gentleman recovering first, observed that this was only a reason for hastening the marriage, in order that Tom's distinguished race might be transmitted to posterity; and requesting the Gifted to console Mr Grig during his temporary absence, he withdrew to settle the preliminaries with his niece immediately.

'And now, gentlemen, a very extraordinary and remarkable occurrence took place; for as Tom sat in a melancholy way in one chair, and the Gifted sat in a melancholy way in another, a couple of doors were thrown violently open, the two young ladies rushed in, and one knelt down in a loving attitude at Tom's feet, and the other at the Gifted's. So far, perhaps, as Tom was concerned—as he used to say—you will say there was nothing strange in this; but you will be of a different opinion when you understand that Tom's young lady was kneeling to the Gifted, and the Gifted's young lady to Tom.

'Holloa! stop a minute!' cries Tom; 'here's a mistake. I need condoling with by sympathising woman, under my afflicting circumstances; but we're out in the figure. Change partners, Mooney.'

'Monster!' cries Tom's young lady, clinging to the Gifted.

'Miss!' says Tom. 'Is that your manners?'

'I abjure thee!' cries Tom's young lady. 'I renounce thee. I never will be thine. Thou,' she says to the Gifted, 'art the object of my first and all-engrossing passion. Wrapt in thy sublime visions, thou hast not perceived my love; but, driven to despair, I now shake off the woman and avow it. Oh, cruel, cruel man!'

'With which reproach she laid her head upon the Gifted's breast, and put her arms about him in the tenderest manner possible, gentlemen.

'And I,' says the other young lady, in a sort of ecstasy, that made Tom start,—'I hereby abjure my chosen husband too. Here me, Goblin!'—this was to the Gifted—'Hear me! I hold thee in the deepest detestation. The maddening interview of this one night has filled my soul with love—but not for thee. It is for thee, for thee, young man,' she cries to Tom. 'As Monk Lewis finely observes, Thomas, Thomas, I am thine, Thomas, Thomas, thou art mine: thine for ever, mine for ever!' With which words, she became very tender likewise.

'Tom and the Gifted, gentlemen, as you may believe, looked at each other in a very awkward manner, and with thoughts not at all complimentary to the two young ladies. As to the Gifted, I have heard Tom say often, that he was certain he was in a fit, and that he had it inwardly.

'Speak to me! oh, speak to me!' cries Tom's young lady to the Gifted.

'I don't want to speak to anybody,' he says, finding his voice at last, and trying to push her away. 'I think I had better go. I'm—I'm frightened,' he says looking about as if he had lost something.

'No one look of love!' she cries. 'Hear me, while I dec're—'

'I don't know how to look a look of love,' he says all in a maze. 'Don't declare anything. I don't want to hear anybody.'

'That's right!' cries the old gentleman (who it seems had been listening). 'That's right! Don't hear her. Emma shall marry you tomorrow, my friend, whether she likes it or not, and she shall marry Mr. Grig.'

Gentlemen, these words were no sooner out of his mouth than Galileo Isaac Newton Flammstead (who it seems had been listening too) darts in spinning round and round, like a young giant's top, cries, 'Let her. Let her. I'm fierce; I'm furious. I give her leave. I'll never marry anybody after this—never. It isn't safe. She is the falsest of the false,' he cries, tearing his hair and gnashing his teeth; 'and I'll live and die a bachelor!'

'The little boy,' observed the Gifted gravely, 'albeit of tender years, has spoken wisdom. I have been led to the contemplation of woman-kind, and will not adventure on the troubled waters of matrimony.

'What!' says the old gentleman, 'not marry my daughter! Won't you, Mooney? Not if I make her? Won't you? Won't you?'

'No,' says Mooney, 'I won't. And if anybody asks me any more, I'll run away, and never come back again.'

'Mr Grig,' says the old gentleman, 'the stars must be obeyed. You have not changed your mind because of a little childish folly—eh, Mr. Grig?'

'Tom, gentlemen, had had his eyes about him, and was pretty sure that this was a device and trick of the waiting maid, to put him off his inclination. He had seen her hiding and skipping about the two doors, and had observed that a very little whispering from her pacified the Sala-

mander directly. 'So,' thinks Tom, 'this is a plot—but it won't fit.

'Eh, Mr. Grig?' says the old gentleman.

'Why, Sir,' says Tom, pointing to the crucible, 'if the soup's nearly ready—'

'Another hour beholds the consummation of our labor,' returned the old gentleman.

'Very good,' says Tom, with a mournful air.

'It's only for two months, but I may as well be the richest man in the world even for that time. I'm not particular. I'll take her, Sir. I'll take her.'

'The old gentleman was in a rapture to find Tom still in the same mind, and drawing the young lady towards him by little and little, was joining their hands by main force, when all of a sudden, gentlemen, the crucible blows up with a great crash; every body screams; the room is filled with smoke; and Tom, not knowing what may happen next, throws himself into a fancy attitude, and says, 'Come on, if you're a man!' without addressing himself to anybody in particular.

'The labors of fifteen years!' says the old gentleman, clasping his hands and looking down upon the Gifted, who was saving the pieces, 'are destroyed in an instant!'—And I am told, gentlemen, by-the-bye, that this same philosopher's stone would have been discovered a hundred times at least, to speak within bounds, if it was not for the unfortunate circumstance that the apparatus always blows by, when it's on the very point of succeeding.

'Tom turns pale when he hears the old gentleman expressing himself to this unpleasant effect, and stammers out that if it's quite agreeable to all parties, he would like to know exactly what has happened, and what change has really taken place in the prospects of that company.

'We have failed for the present, Mr. Grig,' says the old gentleman, wiping his forehead, 'and I regret it the more, because I have in fact invested my niece's five thousand pounds in this glorious speculation. But don't be cast down,' he says, anxiously—'in another fifteen years, Mr. Grig—'

'Oh!' cries Tom, letting the young lady's hand fall. 'Were the stars very positive about this union, Sir?'

'They were,' says the old gentleman.

'I'm sorry to hear it,' Tom makes answer, 'for it's no go, Sir.'

'No what!' cries the old gentleman.

'Go, Sir,' says Tom, fiercely, 'I forbid the banns.' And with these words—'which are the very words he used—he sat himself down in a chair, and laying his head upon the table, tho't with a great secret grief of what was to come to pass on that day two months.

'Tom always said, gentlemen, that that waiting-maid was the artfullest manx he had ever seen; and he left it in writing in this country when he went to colonize abroad, that he was certain in his own mind she and the Salamander had blown up the philosopher's stone on purpose, and to cut him out of his property. I believe Tom was in the right, gentlemen: but

whether or no, she comes forward at this point, and says, 'May I speak, Sir?' and the old gentleman answering 'Yes, you may,' she goes on to say that 'the stars are no doubt quite right in every respect, but Tom is not the man.' And she says, 'Don't you remember, Sir, that when the clock struck five this afternoon you gave Master Galileo a rap on the head with your telescope, and told him to get out of the way?' 'Yes, I do,' says the old gentleman. 'Then,' says the waiting-maid, 'I say he's the man, and the prophecy is fulfilled.'

The old gentleman staggers at this, as if somebody had hit him a blow on the chest, and cries, 'He! why, he's a boy!' Upon that, gentlemen, the Salamander cries out that he'll be twenty-one next Lady-day; and complains that his father has always been so busy with the sun round which the earth revolves, that he has never taken any notice of the son that revolves round him; and that he hasn't had a new suit of clothes since he was fourteen; and that he wasn't even taken out of nankeen frocks and trowsers till he was quite unpleasant in 'em; and touches on a good many more family matters to the same purpose.

To make short of a long story, gentlemen, they all talk together, and cry together, and remind the old gentleman that as to the noble family, his own grandfather would have been lord mayor if he hadn't died at a dinner the year before; and they show him by all kinds of arguments that if the cousins are married, the prediction comes true every way. At last, the old gentleman, being quite convinced, gives in; and joins their hands; and leaves his daughter to marry anybody she likes; and they are all well pleased; and the Gifted as well as any of them.

'In the middle of this little family party, gentlemen, sits Tom all the while, as miserable as you like. But, when every thing else is arranged, the old gentleman's daughter says, that their strange conduct was a little device of the waiting-maid's to disgust the lovers he had chosen for 'em, and will he forgive her? and if he will, perhaps he might even find her a husband—and when she says that, she looks uncommon hard at Tom. Then the waiting-maid says that, oh dear! she couldn't bear Mr Grig should think she wanted him to marry her; and that she had even gone so far as to refuse the last lamplighter, who was now a literary character (having set up as a bill-sticker); and that she hoped Mr. Grig would not suppose she was on her last legs by any means, for the baker was very strong in his attentions at that moment, and as to the butcher, he was frantic. And I don't know how much more she might have said, gentlemen (for as you know, this kind of young women are rare ones to talk), if the old gentleman hadn't cut in suddenly, and asked Tom if he'd have her, with ten pounds to recompense him for his loss of time and disappointment, and as a kind of bribe to keep the story secret.

'It don't much matter, Sir,' says Tom, 'I ain't long for this world. Eight weeks of marriage, especially with this young woman, might recon-

cile me to my fate. I think,' he says, 'I could go off easy, after that.' With which he embraces her with a very dismal face, and groans in a way that might move a heart of stone—even a philosopher's stone.

"Egad," says the old gentleman, "that reminds me—this bustle put it out of my head—there was a figure wrong. He'll live to a green old age—eighty-seven at least!"

"How much, Sir?" cries Tom.

"Eighty-seven!" says the old gentleman.

"Without another word, Tom flings himself on the old gentleman's neck; throws up his hat; cuts a caper; defies the waiting-maid; and refers her to the butcher.

"You won't marry her!" says the old gentleman, angrily.

"And live after it!" says Tom. "I'd sooner marry a mermaid, with a small-tooth comb and looking-glass."

"Then take the consequences," says the other.

"With those words—I beg your kind attention here, gentlemen, for it's worth your notice—the old gentleman wetted the forefinger of his right hand in some of the liquor from the crucible that was spilt on the floor, and drew a small triangle on Tom's forehead. The room swam

before his eyes, and he found himself in the watch-house."

"Found himself *where*?" cried the vice, on behalf of the company generally.

"In the watch-house," said the chairman. "It was late at night, and he found himself in the very watch-house from which he had been let out that morning."

"Did he go home?" asked the vice

"The watch-house people rather objected to that," said the chairman; "so he stopped there that night and went before the magistrate in the morning. 'Why you're here again, are you?' says the magistrate, adding insult to injury; 'we'll trouble you for five shilling more, if you can conveniently spare the money.' Tom told him he had been enchanted, but it was of no use. He told the contractors the same, but they wouldn't believe him. It was very hard upon him, gentlemen, as he often said, for was it likely he'd go and invent such a tale?"

They shook their heads and told him he'd say any thing but his prayers—as indeed he would; there's no doubt about that. It was the only imputation on his moral character that ever I heard of."

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

CHARITY, A PROMINENT DUTY OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.—A Discourse delivered in St. Thomas Church, Dover, N. H. By Charles Burroughs, D. D. Portsmouth, Mr. Foster.

This is one of the best sermons we have seen for many a day. It is not only well written, but it breathes throughout a truly Catholic spirit. Defining charity to be love, the author applies it to all the multifarious duties of the clergyman, and urges its claims as pre-eminent among the christian virtues. The truly liberal manner in which the author speaks of other denominations, manifests that after stating a general principle he shrinks from none of its results. His remarks on the baneful effects of theological hatred and spiritual despotism are excellent. Dr. Burroughs is a rare example of a man who considers certain doctrines of his own church essential dogmas, and at the same time, is willing to allow that those who dissent from them are not necessarily wrong in their belief. If he is as destitute of dogmatism and intolerance as his sermon, he must be a model for christian ministers to imitate. If the doctrines advanced in his sermon had prevailed in former times, many a bloody scene, which now deforms history, would never have been acted; if they prevailed now, there would be less of that bitterness of spirit, rancorous controversy and intolerance of the tongue, which prevail so extensively in the christian world.

A good portion of the theological persecution has arisen from the admission into creeds of necessary articles of belief. Even Lord Herbert, a deist, asserted that all men would be damned who did not subscribe to

certain doctrines of natural religion. It is plain that if a person deems his own creed to contain any dogmas the belief which is essential to the salvation of others as well as himself, he must look upon different doctrines as damnable heresies, which are destroying the souls of their advocates—and persecution accordingly has arisen in many instances from a benevolent spirit. Dr. Burroughs, if we understand him, lays down the principle that the adoption in theory and practice of such doctrines as a man believes to be essential, is necessary for the salvation of him who so believes, but is not so for him who conscientiously imbibes different opinions. This principle nips intolerance in the bud, and takes away the sting from human creeds.

THE FAMILY LIBRARY, Nos. 131, 132. New York; Harper & Brothers.

We have received from Messrs Tappan & Dennett, four new volumes of this valuable series, forming two distinct works—one entitled, "An Historical and Descriptive Account of Iceland, Greenland and the Farve Islands"—the other, "Manners and Customs of the Japanese." These works are liberally illustrated with maps and engravings and are compiled from the latest and best authorities.

A forthcoming number of Harper's District School Library will be entitled, "American Adventure, by Land and Sea"—a capital name and a capital subject. It will be one of the most popular works of the series; and we look with interest for its appearance. The Harpers get up these volumes in excellent style, and they seem to be prepared with great care by the most accomplished writers.